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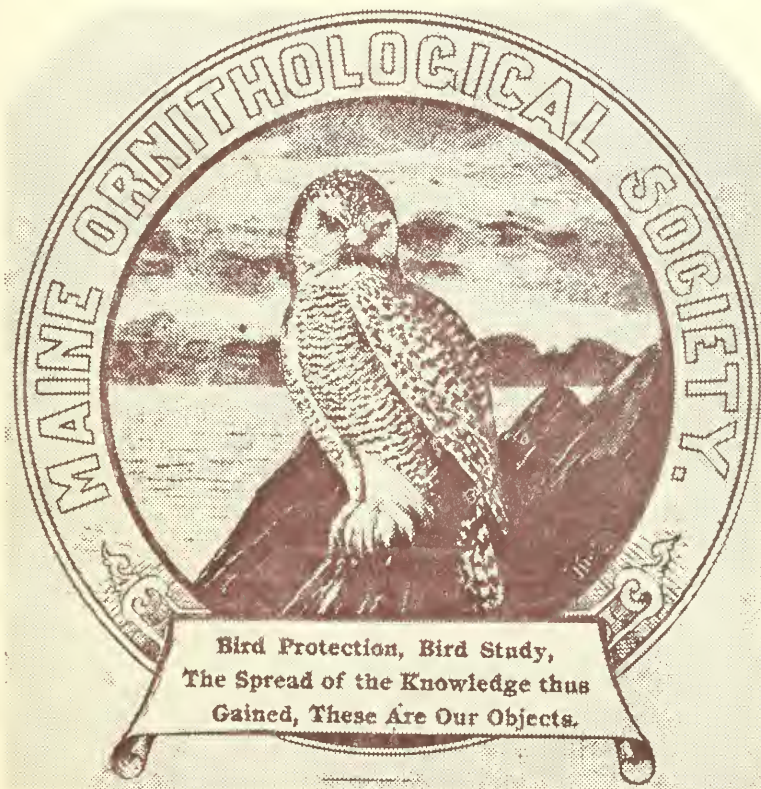


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# The Journal of the Maine Ornithological Society



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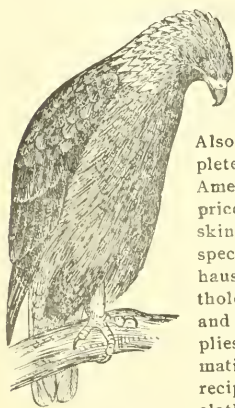
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# The Journal of the Maine Ornithological Society

Published by the Society on the first of March, June, September and December

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Vol. VII

MARCH, 1905

No. 1

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## Journal of the Ninth Annual Meeting of the Maine Ornithological Society.

The ninth annual meeting of the Maine Ornithological Society convened at Bangor, November 25-26, 1904, with headquarters at the Penobscot Exchange. Friday afternoon, at 1.30, the members repaired to the residence of Ex-President Ora W. Knight, and spent the time until 3.30 in looking over his extensive collections. Mr. Knight has, among other rarities, the first recorded specimen of Holboell's Redpoll from the State, the first specimen taken and known to be in existence in Maine of the Short-billed Marsh Wren, the specimen of Cardinal which gives us the record for Maine, it being the individual taken from a flock of three in Gardiner, December 19, 1895, and the only specimen from the State which does not seem to be an escaped cage bird. Mr. Knight also has a very complete collection of eggs in sets of North American birds, including a very full list of the Anatidæ, with nests of down, and skins of the Warbler and Sparrow families, with nests and eggs. Among these the rarest find was the first recorded set of Yellow Palm Warbler taken in the United States. Mr. Knight has devoted much time to the study of Maine birds, and the nests and eggs were gathered to aid in this work. A very complete collection of Lepidoptera, including Hybrids reared by Mr. Knight, and many minerals and botanical specimens, were also seen there.

At 4.00 o'clock the members assembled at the rooms of Harry Merrill to inspect his well preserved and neatly arranged collection

of birds, nests, and eggs. Among the most interesting things in Mr. Merrill's collection from the State was the first nest and eggs of the Golden-crowned Kinglet ever taken. This is the set described in all the older works dealing with the oology of this part of the country. Another interesting specimen in Mr. Merrill's collection was the Kumlien's Gull, taken at the time when this species was just on the point of being described. Mr. Merrill's bird was one of those used in differentiating the characteristics of this species.

On returning to the hotel from Mr. Merrill's, a short business meeting was held in the parlor of the Penobscot Exchange, with President Spinney in the chair. After the reading of the secretary's report of the last annual meeting, the following committees were appointed by the chair.

ON NOMINATIONS:—Messrs. Knight, Norton, Spinney.

ON RESOLUTIONS:—Messrs. Swain, Ellis, Powers.

ON AUDITING ACCOUNTS:—Prof. L. A. Lee; Miss Mabel Ridley.

On motion of Mr. Knight, voted that a committee be appointed to prepare the manuscript for publication relating to the birds of Maine, containing brief descriptions of the individual species, nesting habits, and distribution in and out of the State, said manuscript not to exceed three hundred and fifty printed pages. After some discussion this was laid upon the table.

On motion of Mr. Ellis the following persons were elected to active membership: Mr. B. N. Allen, Castine; Miss Marina Everett, Camden; Prof. Hurlbert, Bangor; Miss Lora C. Eastman, Portland; Mr. Louis E. Legge, Portland.

After the reading of the minutes the meeting adjourned.

The evening meeting was called to order in the Ware Parlors by the Secretary, Wm. L. Powers. This was an open meeting, and many citizens of Bangor were present to enjoy the entertainment. The first speaker was Capt. H. L. Spinney, who chose for his subject "Birds from a Lighthouse." The next speaker was Arthur H. Norton, of Westbrook, who detailed his last summer's examination

of the "Protected Colonies of Birds on the Islands along the Maine Coast." Mr. Norton was followed by Ora W. Knight, of Bangor, who spoke on "Birds of the Penobscot Valley."

All the lectures were illustrated by stereopticon views of birds, nests, and eggs from negatives made by the speakers. Professor Drew, of the University of Maine, not only loaned his excellent electric lantern, but also insured the success of the views by personally conducting the exhibition.

The meeting was a grand success and netted the society a goodly sum.

At 9.30 the next morning the members met at the residence of Manly Hardy, in Brewer, and inspected his extensive collection. Mr. Hardy's collection of North American birds is one of the most extensive collections in the United States. He has, in round numbers, three thousand, three hundred mounted birds, and all but one hundred of them were mounted by himself. He lacks specimens of the Labrador Duck and the Great Auk, both of which have been extinct for many years, but with these and one or two other exceptions he has all the species and sub-species, both male and female, found in North America.

Among the rarities are an adult and a full-grown young of the California Vulture, a species now almost extinct, while Guadalupe Caracara, Guadalupe Petrel, and other varieties nearing extinction, were also represented. A majority of the known specimens of the rare Scaled Petrel have also passed through Mr. Hardy's hands in distribution to other collectors. Among the Maine novelties is the specimen of Willow Ptarmigan taken at Kenduskeag, and a Hybrid Hawk, which the authorities have not agreed in placing closer than to say that it is the offspring of two of the following, Cooper's, Sharp-shinned, Broad-winged. Mr. Hardy's collection is especially strong in albinistic and other varying types, and contains so much of interest that it is impossible to say what is most interesting. The visit to Mr. Hardy was especially delightful to your secretary, for he had the pleasure of renewing the acquaintance of Mr. Hardy's son, the artist, whom he met eight years previous while on a trip to

Mt. Katahdin. Mrs. Fanny Hardy Eckstorm, the author of "The Bird Book," "The Woodpeckers," and "The Penobscot Man," helped her father and brother entertain, and her charming personality added not a little to the long-to-be-remembered visit.

#### SATURDAY AFTERNOON.

The public meeting of the society was called to order in the audience room of the Bangor High School, with President Spinney in the chair.

The first article on the program was an illustrated lecture on the "Coloration of Birds," by Wm. L. Powers, of Gardiner.

The next was a paper, "From the Standpoint of an Amateur," by Miss Mabel Ridley, of the Castine Normal School. She treated of her work as a teacher, and showed a wide grasp of her subject and a thorough knowledge of the pedagogical principles underlying all nature teaching. She was listened to with deep interest and attention, and impressed her audience that she was not an amateur.

The next paper was written by Sanford Ritchie, of Dover, and recorded the finding of the nest and eggs of the Hudsonian Chickadee, of Dover, Maine, the first record for our State.

The meeting closed with a talk by Manly Hardy on the habits and life history of many raptorial birds, and, as he described species unfamiliar to his hearers, his remarks were especially valuable and interesting. It is a matter of regret that no member of the society is a shorthand writer, for these extemporaneous remarks by such men as Mr. Hardy and Professor Stanton are too valuable to be lost from the records of the society. Mr. Hardy has traveled all over Maine and lower Canada as a fur buyer, and many years of his life have been passed in the forest. It is safe to say that no man, whether Indian or white man, ever possessed so intimate an acquaintance with the birds and animals of our State as Mr. Hardy.

As no means for lighting the audience room had been provided, the meeting adjourned to the parlor of the Penobscot Exchange.

Mr. Knight, of the committee on nominations, reported as follows: "Your committee has attended to its duty and begs leave

to report as follows : For President, Prof. L. A. Lee, of Brunswick ; Vice-President, Dr. H. H. Brock, of Portland ; Secretary and Treasurer, John Merton Swain, of Skowhegan ; Editor, Frank T. Noble, of Augusta ; Councillors, Capt. H. L. Spinney, of Seguin ; Ora W. Knight, of Bangor."

On motion of Mr. Powers, voted to accept the report.

On motion of Mr. Norton, voted to instruct Mr. Knight to cast the ballot of the society for these officers. He did so, and the persons named in the report were declared by the chair elected.

Mr. Ellis, of the committee on resolutions, reported as follows :

*Be it Resolved*, That the thanks of the society are due and are hereby tendered to Mrs. Ora W. Knight for her hospitality to members in attendance on this meeting ; to the Maine Central and Bangor & Aroostook Railroads for reduced rates ; to the School Board of Bangor for the tender of the audience room of the High School for our afternoon meeting ; to Professor Drew, of the University of Maine, for the use of his lantern and his services in running it ; to Mr. Knight, Manly Hardy and Harry Merrill for the opportunities to examine their extensive collections.

*And be it further Resolved*, That these resolutions be spread on the records of the society, and a copy sent to the persons named therein.

HIRAM ELLIS,  
J. MERTON SWAIN,  
WM. L. POWERS.

On motion of Mr. Swain the report was adopted and the resolutions accepted.

Professor Lee, of the auditing committee, reported that they had examined the accounts of the treasurer and editor, and found them correct.

PROF. L. A. LEE,  
MISS M. P. RIDLEY.

On motion of Mr. Ellis, voted to accept the report.

The matter of the emblem for the society was then brought up by Mr. Powers, who exhibited specimens of the design submitted by



Mr. Rich. This design was on the whole deemed satisfactory, with some minor changes suggested for the posing of the central figure and the addition of the date of founding.

The discussion on this question brought forth the fact that the exact date was unknown to the members present, and on motion of Mr. Norton it was voted to accept the date of the starting of the correspondence society of the United Ornithologists of Maine by Stephen J. Adams, of Cornish.

Professor Lee was recognized by the chair and arose to explain that he could no longer loan the lantern slides of birds, nests and eggs which he had made from negatives submitted by the members.

Mr. Norton then read a letter from Dana Sweet, relative to his work on the migrations of Maine birds, and suggested that the society appoint him a special committee to attend to this important matter.

On motion of Professor Lee, the society voted that "Mr. Sweet be officially authorized to continue the work on bird migration."

On motion of the same gentleman, voted that the committee on Audubon societies for the ensuing year be composed of Messrs. Norton, Lane, Powers, Tufts.

Voted on motion of Mr. Norton that the society recommend that the open season for Eider Ducks be from September 1st to March 1st. And on motion of the same gentlemen, voted that the council be empowered to endorse some measure for the better protection of game birds, and instructed to bring same before the proper authorities.

The matter of the revised list of the Birds of Maine was then taken from the table, and, on motion of Professor Lee, Mr. Ora W. Knight was elected chairman of this committee, with power to appoint other members. He appointed Arthur H. Norton, of Westbrook.

On motion of Professor Lee, Messrs. Frank T. Noble, W. H. Brownson and Wm. L. Powers were elected to serve as a financial committee to arrange for the publication of the work called for in the preceding motion.

The committee on society emblem was then reappointed for the ensuing year, and the committee on the publication of the life history of the Warblers of Maine was instructed to carry on their work and empowered to fill vacancies.

Mr. Knight suggested that the next annual meeting be held in Portland, and an informal vote was passed to this end.

On motion of Professor Lee, voted to adjourn *sine die*.

WM. L. POWERS, *Secretary*.

### President's Address.

Read at the Annual Meeting, Bangor, December, 1904.

By CAPT. H. L. SPINNEY.

#### MEMBERS OF THE MAINE ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY:

This, the ninth annual meeting of our society, demands the attention of its members. We are here to review the work of the past year, to consider the condition and standing of the society and to adopt such changes as may seem best for its continuance and prosperity. It gives me much pleasure to greet you to-day, and to feel that as a member I perhaps have not added my mite in vain toward helping make this society an honor to the name it bears. Through our efforts this society is now recognized the length and breadth of our land, and such recognition can only be maintained by the faithfulness and loyalty of every member. "United we stand, divided we fall."

While the past year has been one of improvement to the society, there are yet questions of vital importance that need careful consideration. Our JOURNAL is the record of our merits, the vitality of our society, and as such needs most earnest attention. Improvement has marked its columns during the past year, and while the editor, as in the past, has not been handicapped for material to fill its pages, the funds to secure its printing has been a serious matter.

Our mailing list now shows an income which, if promptly collected, would assure well filled pages and prompt distribution to subscribers. That much effort has been made to collect the arrears, and with what success, will be shown by the treasurer in his report. Some measure should be adopted, so that in the future no arrears may appear on the mailing list.

The contributions to the life history of species of the Warblers of our State that have lately appeared in the columns of our JOURNAL with others that are to follow, and the notes on the Finches found in Maine, should elicit the commendation of every ornithologist, and fully recompense every name upon its subscription list.

The supply of application blanks for membership and copies of our constitution have been exhausted for some time. New ones should be prepared in such form as shall be recommended. An effort should also be made to supply the executive committee with society stationery. A design for an emblem to be used on the publications and stationery of the society has been submitted for approval and a change in the design advised. This should also receive attention.

A very important question to be settled is how shall we publish the new list of the birds of Maine. At a former meeting, held at Portland, authority was given Mr. Ora W. Knight to prepare such a list, the same to be published under conditions specified by the society. The list is now ready for publication, and such action should be taken as will at once enable the author to reap the reward of his well-earned merits.

An effort should be made at the next legislature to secure protection for the few Eider Ducks that now breed on our coast. The only Ducks of that species now breeding in the United States are limited to a small area in Jericho Bay, and unless the few pairs that are known to breed there are protected we cannot long claim them as breeding on our coast.

After such laws are secured the question of warden service in many localities is a consideration. While many of the school-teachers of the State are doing much toward bird protection in the

city and large village schools, many of the schools in our rural districts, where most of the birds breed, have hardly heard of such a work. This fact, I think, is more noticeable in the districts along our coast than in the country. Many of the people on the coast would resent the killing of our orchard and woodland birds, while those of the shore and coast they consider legitimate game. If in some direct way we could secure the sympathy of such districts, we should not need a warden for every bird.

Thanking the members of the society for the honor they have conferred upon me during the past two years, and pledging the loyalty I have always felt, I surrender my position to another care.

### Are the Choicer Varieties of Ducks Increasing in Maine Waters, and if so, Why?

By FRANK T. NOBLE, Augusta, Me.

For many years the writer has taken more than an ordinary interest in the water fowl of New England, both as an ornithologist and a sportsman, particularly those Anatidæ whose delicacy of flesh and fine flavor cause them to rank high in the list of desirable game birds.

Various traditions and unauthentic stories, handed down from generation to generation, would have us understand that big bags of these choice birds were, years ago, of common occurrence; indeed, that in those days they were almost as numerous as the sands upon the seashore. As for myself I am decidedly skeptical that such conditions ever existed hereabouts, and certainly during recent years such species as the Mallard (*anas boschas*), Widgeon (*a. Americana*), Gadwall (*a. streperus*), Pintail (*dafila acuta*) and Redhead (*aythya Americana*) have been taken by the average gunner only at rare intervals.

Probably the most attractive feeding ground for the river Ducks in our State is Merrymeeting Bay, a shallow body of water

formed by the junction of four rivers, the Kennebec, Androscoggin, Cathance and Abbakadassett. This great fresh water bay, with its rank growth of grass and rushes, its numerous creeks and inlying pond holes, forms an ideal resting and feeding place for the various kinds of water fowl. It is in these waters that I have noticed recently a decided increase in the numbers of certain Ducks formerly considered rare, and this fact has prompted the question at the head of this article, with the hope that others may be able to add to our knowledge concerning their abundance or otherwise in other localities.

Some twenty years ago, so I am told, a few gunners living near the bay shore procured some wild rice (*zizania aquatica*), from the West, sowing it about the bay as an experiment. This, or rice brought by the birds themselves, has gradually resown itself and spread, until in the fall of 1904 there was a crop of rice never before equalled, affording a sumptuous repast for all the Ducks who cared to come and partake of it. Query. Has this harvest of a favorite food recently discovered caused certain species to deviate from their usual course of migration and tarry here to rest and feed? In partial answer, allow me briefly to refer to the varieties and numbers of the infrequently met species that came to my notice in and about the bay during the past fall.

Early in September the Ducks principally in evidence were the Dusky, which had been gathering since August. With them were a few scattered bunches of Blue-wing and Green-wing Teal and an occasional Pintail. As the season advanced these flocks were augmented by new arrivals, and the rarer varieties would occasionally be seen. By September 15th, those graceful birds, the Pintails, increased, and bunches of five to eight were not unusual. They usually keep by themselves and are unsuspicious of danger as a rule.

BLUE-WINGED TEAL.—The Blue-winged Teal were now flocking in what seemed incredible numbers for this locality. Flocks of fifty, one hundred and even two hundred birds were frequently seen in the air, quartering hither and thither in their swift, nervous flight,



which is characteristic of these birds. Suddenly they would with one accord pitch headlong into the grass as if to feed and rest, only the next moment to rise with a great whirr and fly to some other part of the bay. On September 16th, just at dusk, a flock came suddenly out of the sky and flew past my float that must have numbered at least three hundred birds. I had never seen such a bunch of Teal in Maine waters, though I once witnessed a similar sight in the Grand Lake region in New Brunswick.

From September 15th to the 25th, Blue-winged Teal were everywhere in evidence in flocks of five to twenty-five. A few of those charming little Bantam Ducks, the Green-wing Teal, would be found from day to day, but only a few,—no large flocks—and their path of migration was evidently not across Merrymeeting Bay.

BLACK DUCKS.—Pintails were still more common about the 25th, and the Black Duck, that grand old stand-by, was seemingly everywhere—scarcely a moment but what pairs or flocks of ten to fifty could be seen in the air in some quarter.

It must be borne in mind that the vision, aided by good glasses, covered a feeding and flying territory of some five miles north and south by nearly two miles east and west, a large expanse of country.

THE MALLARD.—From October 1st to 10th, the diving fowl or sea Ducks began to appear in greater numbers, and with the advent of cold nights a few of those grand birds, the Mallards, were seen, usually alone, but sometimes trying to be social with the Black Ducks. A little later, and good-sized flocks appeared upon the scene, and the numbers observed was one of the greatest surprises experienced by the writer. At first flocks of five or ten would unexpectedly be found hidden away in the thick grass or wild rice. These would gradually unite, I presume, and with fresh arrivals from some unknown quarter form flocks of as many as twenty-five or thirty birds. In some instances it would seem as if the beautiful green-headed Drakes constituted almost the entire flock, and a pretty picture they made when on the wing in the bright sunlight. With their delicately marked under parts, dazzling green heads and

neck, with white collars, they appeared as if in full dress, the aristocrats of the Anatidæ, as they surely are.

These choice birds, from this time to November 1st, were seen every day in numerous bunches, and even persistent gunning could not drive them from the bay, merely causing them to seek the more open water. Surely if this is what we may expect in the future, the Mallard can now be classed among our common Ducks.

REDHEAD.—About October 15th came the advance guard of those justly celebrated Ducks, the Redhead close cousin to that *rara avis* the Canvasback, a record of whose capture in Maine waters I hope to establish before long. The Redhead is far from scarce hereabouts now. He is a late arrival and remains after most of the other Ducks have moved southward. My first experience with them in any numbers was in the fall of 1903. On November 5th of that year, late in the afternoon, I skulled a flock of nearly forty birds in the open water, and was within eighty yards before they became suspicious. As the sunlight fell upon the animated group, showing off their rich bronze heads, the sight was one never to be forgotten.

From October 20th to November 1st, 1904, they were seen frequently, usually in sizable flocks. They appear clannish and inhabit the more open water during the day, and consequently are not easily taken. That they are partial to wild rice, upon which they feed at night, is proven by examination of their crops and the delicious flavor this food imparts to their flesh.

GADWALL.—The heretofore rare Gadwall or Gray Duck (*anas strepera*), put in an appearance rather late. It was October 27th when I observed and took the first one, a female, which was with a pair of Mallards. On the 28th and 29th they came in fairly good-sized flocks, fifteen or more being repeatedly seen together, but the weather was boisterous now, and we could rarely get within gunshot of them.

WIDGEON.—The American Widgeon (*anas Americana*), was also seen about the same time—beautiful birds, swift flyers like the Teal. They cannot be mistaken once recognized, their immaculate under parts making them very conspicuous when on the wing.

They seem to gather in rather larger flocks than the Gadwall, twenty-five or thirty together not being uncommon. Both these latter species were quite numerous for a short time, and I am inclined to class them as common migrants in these waters from late in October to about November 5th. I fully expect to see the European Widgeon (*anas penelope*) taken here at no distant day.

The Gadwall and Widgeon are very closely related, and from an epicurean standpoint, in my humble opinion, no web-footed fowl can surpass them in excellency as a table bird, when properly served, and their appearance in Maine waters ought to be hailed with the greatest satisfaction.

TWO THOUSAND DUCKS.—I wish the readers of the JOURNAL could have been with me on the Kennebec river October 27th last, that they might have enjoyed an object lesson upon the subject of water fowl in Maine. On that day there was "bedded" in the river between Brown's Point and the lower end of Swan Island not less than two thousand Ducks and probably more, the aggregate being made up of easily defined flocks of Black Ducks, Redheads, American Scaup, Lesser Scaup, Mallards, Widgeon, Gadwalls and Ruddy Ducks, and probably other varieties. These birds had been harassed for weeks, gradually becoming shy of gunning floats, and had taken refuge in the deep open water. Here they rested during the day, secure from molestation, for, long before a float could approach within gunshot, those nearest would take wing, and then, after a moment's hesitation, the entire flock would rise with a roar like a mighty cataract or a swiftly moving railroad train, and, flying up the river a quarter of a mile, would settle upon the water again.

In closing, permit me to make mention of the only Duck that is now met with more rarely than formerly, and they stand alone as the one species evidently decreasing. I refer to that beautiful Bridal Duck, the Wood Duck (*aix sponsa*), they of the unsurpassed plumage, clothed as they are in a veritable Joseph's coat of many colors. I fear these birds are nearing extinction, as during the past two years I have failed to observe a single specimen in the bay or elsewhere. Verily "'Tis pity, and pity 'tis 'tis true." But we

have an evident increase of the several exceedingly desirable species referred to above, to compensate in a measure for the loss of this one, and possibly with a rigid enforcement of that wise statute, prohibiting spring shooting, the few surviving ones may be spared to multiply and replenish the earth, a consummation devoutly to be wished.

### Notes on the Warblers Found in Maine.

(Continued from Vol. VI, p. 72.)

Contributions to the Life History of the Mourning Warbler.

*Geothlypis philadelphia* (Wils.).

By J. MERTON SWAIN.

GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION.—MIGRATION RANGE.—Accidental in So. Carolina, rare in Louisiana, but common in Texas. Texas seems to be the point where this species enters and leaves the United States. From thence the lines of migration extend north to Manitoba and northeast along the west side of the Alleghenies to New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and the Magdalen Islands.

BREEDING RANGE.—Not common in northern Minnesota and the Red River Valley; rarely in Assinboin. Is found breeding, but not common, in Michigan, Central Ontario, northern New York, Vermont and New Hampshire, and in the Catskill Mountains and Berkshire Hills, Mass. Is locally common in northern Maine and east to New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island and Nova Scotia. Has been known to breed in the mountains of Pennsylvania and West Virginia.

WINTER RANGE.—It is not an uncommon winter resident in Costa Rica, Panama, Colombia and a few winter in Ecuador. It usually frequents the higher altitudes in winter in the tropics. It is one of the latest migrants to reach the United States, as it lingers late in South America.

The Mourning Warbler seems to be one of the least known of this interesting family that breed in our State. The records of its

occurrence seem to be few. It seems to be transient in the southern counties of our State, and a rare summer resident in the counties of the Canadian farms. Boardman gives it in his list of "Birds of the St. Croix Valley" as "very rare." Is reported "common" at Fort Fairfield (Aroostook Co.) (Batcheller Bull. Nutt. Orn. Cl., Vol. 7, p. 110), and is reported as occurring at Upton by Mr. Wm. Brewster. I find no mention of it in the late Clarence H. Morrell's notes at Pittsfield.

It seems to somewhat resemble its near relative, *Geothlypis trichas brachidactyla* (Swains.), in its choice of feeding grounds and its choice of location for its summer home. It is one of the late arrivals in the State, in fact, one of the latest of this family to arrive, reaching the interior at about the time the Blackpolls arrive. Soon after arrival it may be observed, but a pair in a place, feeding about the dense underbrush on the margin of some low-land woods or second growth swamp, or on some side hill, covered with brush, near a deep-wooded ravine, and soon after its arrival it begins its nest building. The Migration Report for 1902 shows it was first observed near Waterville on May 24th, and at Avon (Franklin Co.) on May 24th (JOURNAL Me. Orn. Soc., Vol. VI., No. 3, p. 80). I find no records of its nest being found in the State.

Mr. Fred B. Spaulding, of Lancaster, N. H., has found it breeding near his home. He writes me as follows: "It was not until June 8, 1901, that I found a nest of the Mourning Warbler. On that date, in company with my old friend, Judge Clark, of Saybrook, Ct., we were searching a hillside, near a small trickling stream, when I discovered a nest, new to us both, containing five fresh eggs. The nest was supported by some leaning raspberry bushes, sixteen inches from the ground. No bird was on the nest when I discovered it, but on our retiring a short distance she returned. At our approach she slipped from the nest and ran off through the vines and bushes like a mouse, repeating this act as often as we gave her the opportunity. After trying in vain to get a good look at the bird through a glass, and being unable to identify it, I collected the bird and found it to be a female Mourning War-



bler. The nest was very large and compact. On the bottom were quite a few dead leaves, interwoven with coarse straws; inside of these a lot of finer stems, and lined with dark rootlets and a very few hairs. Neither the nest nor the eggs were at all similar to the Maryland Yellowthroats, which I fancied they would resemble. Since that I have found no nests, but I find the birds in similar localities each year, on hillsides overgrown with raspberry bushes, facing woods at a short distance."

I first identified this interesting species in Farmington, about fifteen years ago. I saw it and heard it singing on a hillside, near a small stream, the latter part of May, and have usually seen one or more pairs each spring since. It has a rich, gurgling song, and when once it becomes fixed in one's ear it is not to be forgotten, and not likely to be confounded with the song of any of its relatives. For a description of its song I can do no better than to quote from Chapman's Handbook: "Its common song consists of a simple, clear, warbling whistle, resembling the syllables truċ, truē, truċ, tru, too, the voice rising on the first three syllables and falling on the last two."

During the nesting season he has a way of perching at frequent intervals on some branch, usually a dead one, and singing for fifteen or twenty minutes, then very suddenly he takes a rapid descent to the thicket near by, where doubtless his mate is sitting on the nest. On June 12th, 1894, at Farmington, I observed a male singing on a perch near a raspberry thicket, on a sidehill sloping up from a small stream, but though I spent several mornings trying to locate the nest I was not able to do so. I saw a pair evidently nest-building near Winslow (Kennebec Co.) the last days of May, 1901, but lack of time prevented me from locating the nest, though I had it marked to a certain hillside not far from the Kennebec river. The next year I saw a pair near the same ravine, and also a pair evidently engaged in rearing their young between Athens and Hartland, in Somerset Co. The same year, in June, I heard the song of this Warbler on a hillside in Farmington, and located a nest which I presumed was of this species, but, try as I might, the female would

slip from the nest and glide, mouse-like, from my view and remain hidden, so that with the limited time I had to remain I was not able to identify the owner. This nest was placed in a dense growth of raspberry bushes, weeds and ferns, in an old cutting, which was well grown up to clumps of underbrush of maple, beech, birch, hemlock and spruce. It was situated about six inches from the ground, in a clump of vines, and made up of very similar material as the nest above described by Mr. Spaulding, and contained four incubated eggs. They somewhat resembled the eggs of the Yellow-throat.

On June 10, 1903, while driving from Athens to Hartland, in Somerset Co., I saw a male Mourning Warbler perched on a limb of a tree, the same tree in which I had seen him in the trip two weeks before. I drove my horse to a house near by and left him and returned to look for a nest. I again saw the male and heard his pleasing song. The locality was a typical place for this Warbler to be nesting. After much search through the underbrush and old raspberry vines, I located the nest, with four eggs in it. The female was on the nest as I approached, and skulked off near the ground, only giving me opportunity to catch a glance at her. I marked the place carefully, and retired some distance from the place and waited for her to return to the nest. After a considerable time I stealthily approached the nest and placed my hat over it and female, thus positively establishing her identity. The nest was quite a bulky affair and placed at the base of a clump of coarse weed stalks about six inches from the ground. The outer nest was of dry leaves and vine stalks. The nest proper was made up with a thick outer wall of dead, coarse, flat-bladed grass, with finer grasses and a few weed stalks, and all through this outer wall was interwoven a few small, dead, white maple leaves. The inner wall was composed of fine grasses, and the inner lining contained a few horse hairs. It was a very neat, compact nest, well built to protect the eggs from the dampness from the moist ground, where it was placed. It measured, outside diameter, five inches; inside diameter, two inches; outside depth, three and one-half inches; inside depth, two inches.

The eggs, four in number, were fresh. The general color was white, with a rosy blush, dotted with reddish-brown spots, most thickly sprinkled about the larger end, and does not much resemble the average set of Yellowthroat's eggs, and measured  $.71 \times .54$ ,  $.70 \times .54$ ,  $.71 \times .54$ ,  $.71 \times .53$ .

The last days of June, 1904, I saw a pair of Mourning Warblers feeding young on a side hill near a ravine in Winslow, not far from the Kennebec river.

Mr. Dana Sweet, of Avon (Franklin Co.), sends me the following from his note-book: "May 24, 1902. Saw a Mourning Warbler about three miles west of my home, on low land near the Sandy river. May 24, 1903. Went to the above locality and saw a Mourning Warbler singing on a limb of a tree. June 17th. Heard its song near the same locality. June 2 and 4, 1904. I heard one or two Mourning Warblers near Tim brook, in Eustis." This Warbler doubtless breeds rarely in Mr. Sweet's locality.

This Warbler seems to stay about near the locality after the young leave the nest, and early in August or the first of September it begins its southern movement.

*(To be Continued.)*

We have received a copy of Taylor's Standard Egg Catalogue, revised edition, by Henry R. Taylor, Alameda, California.

This is a neat, handy little hand-book and will be appreciated by collectors and exchangers. It has 92 pages. The first part of 11 pages contains the following of interest: Oological, Troublesome Synonymy, European Methods on Egg Valuation, Concerning Varieties, Don't be too Sure, Contraptions (by F. M. Dille), F. M.'s Field Plan, Some good Ideas; one page on Nest Valuation, and the balance of the book a list of North American Birds, with valuation of each egg, of those that can be estimated.

J. M. S.

# The Journal

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### OFFICERS OF THE MAINE ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

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Mr. Ruthven Deane, of Chicago, is becoming almost a Maine ornithologist, since he spends his summers in Scarborough and naturally takes a lively interest in the bird life which he finds there in considerable variety. Mr. Deane is one of the leading members of the American Ornithologists' Union, and it is therefore quite an acquisition to this State to have the advantage of his observations. Among the matters of special import, of which he has written from time to time to the editor, are the finding of a pair of Myrtle Warblers nesting in Scarborough in the summer of 1903, and the noting of a small flock of Old Squaws along that coast during the summer months. He has contributed to the January number of the *Auk* a valuable account of seeing a Turkey Vulture in Scarborough during the summer of 1904. He says: "While driving at Scarborough Beach, Maine, on Aug. 3, 1904, my attention was directed to a large bird flying over the woods several hundred yards back from the road. I at first took it to be an eagle, but at second glance the characteristic sailing of the bird, with tips of wings raised, left no doubt as to its identity. The Buzzard crossed the road behind us, circling over the salt marshes of the Libby river, and finally recrossed the road directly over our carriage and sufficiently near for us to distinctly see the crimson head and neck." In the *Auk* Mr. Deane states that

this is the tenth record for Maine, relying on records furnished to him by Mr. O. W. Knight and on a revised list sent him by Mr. G. A. Boardman, with an interlineation "two since." Mr. Deane writes the editor under recent date, stating that Mr. Knight has called his attention to the fact that "two since" really referred to Buzzards taken across the line in New Brunswick. Mr. Deane therefore says that the Buzzard he saw in Scarboro should be the eighth record for Maine and not the tenth.

At the annual meeting in Bangor, last December, Mr. Frank T. Noble was elected editor, and Mr. W. H. Brownson, associate editor. Neither one was present at the meeting. When this action was communicated to Mr. Noble, he declined to assume the care of the editorship, but made known his willingness to continue as associate editor. It was then urged that Mr. Brownson be induced to change places with Mr. Noble and act as editor. This arrangement was finally made, with the advice and consent of the Council, though the present editor hesitated to assume duties so exacting, in addition to the work he already has on hand. It was solely out of a sense of duty that he did so, in order to be of what service he could to the society. The magazine is now printed at Portland, and an effort will be made in the future to still further improve its appearance and general make-up. The ornithologists of Maine are capable of publishing a JOURNAL that will take high rank among similar publications in the country. Papers of standard excellence will be contributed from time to time, in order to give a standing to the JOURNAL that will be abreast of the times. An effort will be made to increase the size of the JOURNAL, but this can only be done by adding to the paid subscription list. Every member of the society should make an effort at once to procure at least one new member or subscriber. There is not the slightest doubt that such a result can be accomplished by the exercise of a little work and perseverance. The society, therefore, has the future of the JOURNAL in its own hands. If the members sit quietly and take no active interest in the magazine, its publication might just as well be discontinued



without further delay. If they really desire a JOURNAL of this kind, now is the time to give a practical indication of their will. Shall we have a goodly list of new members and subscribers at once?

The present number of the JOURNAL is somewhat larger than the June number is likely to be, on account of the long and very interesting report of the annual meeting furnished by Mr. Powers. The article on Ducks by Mr. Noble is timely and well written, being the most valuable contribution relating to this family of water birds that has recently appeared in Maine. Mr. Swain's contribution on the Mourning Warbler will be read with pleasure by every member of the society, not less by those who have searched in vain for this species than by those who have been fortunate enough to find it, either as a summer resident or rare migrant. Mr. Clark gives us some idea of the fine additions he has been making of late to a collection that is beginning to be pretty well known all over the State.

A Sharp-shinned Hawk has been visiting the city limits of Portland this winter. He was seen a number of days prior to the 5th of February, by several trustworthy observers. On that date he was fully identified, as he sat on a low bough of a maple tree on the Brown estate, on the Western Promenade. Two weeks later he was still there, and was apparently settled down for the winter. So far as known there is no record of this Hawk wintering in Maine, but it is not uncommon in Massachusetts during cold weather. As a matter of fact, southern New England has for the past two or three years experienced more severe extremes of weather than Maine, which may in a measure account for the frequency of summer birds remaining as far north as this in winter.

The note of Mr. Powers relative to the Dovekie has been read with interest by the editor, from the fact that about the same date a bird of this species was caught on the Cape shore after a great storm and brought to his residence. It was kept alive over night,

and was well and vigorous in the morning, when it was taken to Pond Cove and liberated. It struck out for deep water where the waves were rolling high and was soon engulfed by the boiling surf. It did not mind this in the least, and invariably came out of the big waves into the comparatively smooth water beyond, very much as if it enjoyed the commotion. The last seen of it, the bird was riding calmly on the billows, rising and falling with rhythmic motion, fully at home in its proper element. The same storm also blew a Dovekie six or seven miles inland to Westbrook, where it was shown to Mr. Arthur H. Norton and fully identified. This bird died soon after it was picked up.

The size of the June JOURNAL will depend largely on the fresh interest which may be awakened by the present issue in a new and enlarged form. If sufficient effort is made, the membership of the Maine Ornithological Society can be doubled. Each member should secure at least one friend for membership. One dollar pays the year's dues and entitles the member to the JOURNAL without extra cost for a year. Every man, woman or child who is interested in the study and protection of birds should identify himself with the Maine society. Let us all take hold and build up our organization, thereby enabling the publication of a large and creditable JOURNAL.

We desire to call special attention to the advertisement of Loring, Short & Harmon, published in this issue and paid for at liberal rates. This firm is able to supply at a reasonable price any book on birds or flowers that is published. Persons living in remote parts of the State may order what they need, with full confidence that they will get the full value of their money promptly.

The design which appears on the cover of this number was made without charge by Mr. Walter H. Rich, of Portland, and is nearly the same that was submitted to the society for an emblem. As soon as the official emblem is adopted it will be put in place of the one herewith printed. The half-tone engraving was made by the *Portland Advertiser* for the society free of charge.

## Additions to an Eastern Maine Collection.

By CLARENCE H. CLARK, Lubec, Me.

*Catharista Atrata* (BLACK VULTURE).—I have in my collection one of this species captured in this town Aug. 25, 1904. It is an adult male, and the dimensions agree with Chapman's description. Although Knight in his *Birds of Maine* reports for Washington County, "not uncommon some seasons," I do not know of a record or report of this occurrence as far east for a period of twenty years.

*Sturnella Magna* (MEADOWLARK).—The occurrence of this bird in Washington County is of rare instance. Boardman reported "accidental," which is no doubt correct. Oct. 10th, 1904, an adult male was shot in this town. It was solitary and feeding on a heath known as The Lowlands. This is the only record for this county for a long time. The bird is now in my collection.

*Olor Cygnus* (WHOOING SWAN).—Sept. 10th, 1903, one of these Arctic residents was captured near Poke-a-moon-shine lake, in Washington County, and sold to a taxidermist in New Brunswick. After carefully securing all facts and data concerning the bird and its capture, and being unable to find another record of its capture in the States, I considered that such a rare specimen should be in some Maine collection, and finding no one else "rising to the occasion," I purchased it for my own collection, where it is at present. Its length is 3 feet 11 3-4 inches; wing, 17 3-4 inches; extent of wings, 5 feet 9 inches. It is well fitted for its northern clime, having a compact covering of down and fine feathers one and three-quarters inches thick. It is easily distinguished by the yellow covering of the lores, and extending over the larger portion of the upper mandible, while its near relative *columbianus* has the yellow only on the lores, and *buccinator* having no yellow. Most authorities give the *cygnus* as a resident of northern Europe and Asia, with occasional occurrence in Greenland. I have a report of their appearance near Dawson City, Alaska, in 1902, but do not have any proof of the fact.

*Regulus Satrapa* (GOLDEN-CROWNED KINGLET).—This<sup>e</sup> is one

of our common migrants that rarely breeds in this county, and the finding of a nest of this bird always awakens the interest of bird students. On the 24th of June, 1903, while strolling along the bank of a small stream, about two miles from this village, I observed what appeared to be a ball of moss in a fir tree of about eighteen feet in height, and on approaching it I noticed a small bird fly from its vicinity. I immediately examined it and found it to be a nest containing nine eggs. I secreted myself and after nearly an hour's waiting was rewarded by seeing a pair of Golden-crowned Kinglets go to it.

I took possession of this rare find and now have it in my collection. It is composed of fine moss and neatly lined with what appears to be the feathers of the Ruffed Grouse. The diameter at the top is 3 3-4 inches outside, and 1 3-4 inches inside. The depth is 3 inches outside, and 1 1-2 inches inside. The bottom is flat, with diameter 1-2 inch smaller than the top. Its form is symmetrical, and the outside is so smooth and firm that it has the appearance of being pressed in a mould. It is the most beautiful thing in the shape of a nest I have ever seen. It was suspended by small branches close to the trunk about twelve feet up.

### Birds of Maine.

After careful deliberation it was deemed advisable to suggest the preparation of a work on the birds of this State which should be in effect a Manual of the Birds of Maine, giving their geographical distribution, range in Maine, descriptions of the birds themselves and their habits, nests and eggs. This matter was brought before the society by me at the recent meeting, and such action as I desired was taken. This work will be not exceeding three hundred and fifty pages of printed matter, and will be as exhaustive and complete as it is possible within this limit of space, scientifically accurate, and at the same time as interesting as possible. With this book in hand, it is hoped that a person of average ability will be able to identify

any bird he may find in Maine, and ascertain where its home is, how it builds its nest, and what its eggs are like, what it eats, etc.

The preparation of this work will require some time, and the financing of its publication is also a matter of some difficulty. We can only say that the book will be published as soon as possible, and at a cost which will be within the reach of all.

Mr. A. H. Norton, of Portland, will act jointly with the undersigned in the preparation of this work, and also a third party who has not yet been selected.

Very respectfully,

O. W. KNIGHT.

### Erroneous Maine Records.

As many records have been made in the past, and still continue to be republished, in which certain extralimital species are accredited to Maine and New England upon the strength of Mr. Geo. A. Boardman's lists, I wish to state that writers should be cautious about quoting such records without verification. The very title of Mr. Boardman's original list, "Catalogue of the Birds found in the vicinity of Calais, Maine, and about the Island of the Bay of Fundy" should indicate that it was not limited to a consideration of Maine species. Two or three years after this, when Mr. Verrill published a list of species additional to those given by Mr. Boardman, the same title practically was used. Between Nov. 23, 1899, and Feb. 5, 1900, Mr. Boardman published a revised-to-date list of "St. Croix Birds," and it is well to strongly impress upon future ornithological writers the fact that this last list also was not and never purported to be confined to the enumeration of Maine specimens. As a matter of fact, Mr. Boardman, in 1896-1897, personally assured me that many of his rarest specimens were taken within British dominions. Many of the ablest ornithologists of the country have seemed bound to *misquote* Mr. Boardman, and now it seems time to call a halt.

All of Mr. Boardman's rare and accidental takes up to the date of publication of "A List of the Birds of Maine," in 1897, were carefully looked up by Mr. Boardman, and I hold his written statement to the effect that his records as given there are correct and complete, and that all records of specimens not actually taken in Maine have been correctly and properly eliminated and the reason therefor set forth. All authors are therefore cautioned not to quote any records from Washington county and the adjoining portions of British territory and waters which have been made previous to 1897 without first ascertaining whether or not they are made on the authority of Mr. Boardman, and if so and of specimens which are rightly entitled to record as birds of Maine they will be found by reference to "A List of the Birds of Maine."

O. W. KNIGHT.

### The Spirit of the Woods.

The spirit of the woods shuts down  
Upon the heart of man,  
Spellbinding with its solitudes  
That deeper mysteries span.  
Spellbinding by its whispering trees,  
Their wavering interludes  
Ajoining with the singing stars  
In mystic solitudes.

Ajoining with the singing stars  
That shine above its breast,  
While deep within its underworld  
A spirit sits possessed,  
Possessed by daydream glories,  
And loving the solitudes,  
And knowing no other spirit  
But the spirit of the woods.

—C. R. W.



## Bird Notes.

Notes and observations upon bird life within our State are earnestly desired from all our readers for publication in this column, and should be sent to the Associate Editor, Frank T. Noble, Augusta, Maine.

The Hooded Warbler, taken for the first time in Maine by Mr. Samuel T. Dana, of Portland, and reported by Mr. Brownson in the October JOURNAL, and the January *Auk*, has been placed in the Bowdoin College collection.

### A REDHEADED WOODPECKER IN ANDROSCOGGIN COUNTY.

The Redheaded Woodpecker (*melanerpes erythrocephalus*) is such a rare bird in Maine that its occurrence here seems worthy of note. To W. R. Lane, of Mechanic Falls, we are indebted for particulars concerning one observed by him July 17th last, and on subsequent days for nearly two weeks, during which the bird was frequently seen near his residence, on Elm Street.

The bird apparently had no mate, and after finishing his visit disappeared as mysteriously as he came.

### THE ROSE-BREADED GROSBEAK AS A DESTROYER OF POTATO BUGS.

Mr. E. E. Johnson, of East Hebron, writes interestingly to the JOURNAL concerning the avidity with which the Rose-breasted Grosbeak (*zamelodia ludoviciana*) devoured the larvæ of the Colorado potato beetle on his premises last summer.

Two pairs of these beautiful birds made themselves decidedly busy day after day gleaning these noxious slugs from his own and a neighbor's potato vines, doing immeasurable good.

Surely on such evidence we must vote them not only ornamental but extremely useful, and the utmost protection must be afforded these charming choristers.

### MYRTLE WARBLER (DENDROICA CORONATA) NOW A WINTER RESIDENT OF MAINE

Myrtle Warblers spent the winter at Cape Elizabeth in 1903-4, that being the first record of these birds actually staying so far north all winter. This winter I have been keeping close watch of the

same locality to see if they remain again during the entire season of cold. The middle of December I saw several Warblers in the air in that section, but was not able to get near enough to them to fully identify them. On Christmas day, with several companions, I made another search and succeeded in finding at least six Myrtle Warblers, the identification being beyond a doubt. For the next two weeks the Warblers were not seen, though I paid several visits to the place. On the 15th of January I again found the Warblers, two of them this time being seen and fully identified. I have no doubt that they are again wintering there, making two seasons in succession. This would almost make them a winter resident of southern Maine. Mr. Ruthven Deane, of Chicago, two years ago at Scarborough found the Myrtle Warbler nesting. It is therefore probable soon to be rated a permanent resident of this part of the State.

Red-legged Black Ducks, Whistlers and Buffle-heads are again wintering around the inner harbor and around Martin Point bridge. Robins are seen frequently in Portland and at Cape Elizabeth. I saw a Hermit Thrush at Cape Elizabeth Dec. 25, 1904, and one has been reliably reported in January around the Western Promenade in Portland. A Song Sparrow has been seen this winter several times at Pond Cove, Cape Elizabeth.

PORTLAND, MAINE.

W. H. BROWNSON.

#### A CHICKADEE ON A GUN BARREL.

An amusing incident illustrating the tameness of the Chickadee is reported by Dr. Harold G. Giddings, of Gardiner, who in company with a friend was taking a snowshoe tramp through the woods on January 23rd, taking a gun along.

In crossing a frozen stream a flock of Chickadees were encountered flying from one side to the other very close to the trampers, and in a spirit of fun it was suggested that if the gun was held out one might alight upon it.

The experiment was no sooner tried than one of the birds actually lit upon the end of the barrel, gazing inquiringly upon the two intruders for several seconds before resuming its flight.

## IS IT A HYBRID?

The Associate Editor desires to note the personal capture of a Duck drake, at first supposed to be a very large specimen of the Dusky Duck (*anas obscura*), but which upon examination would appear to be a hybrid. The bird was taken, with its mate, in April, and is in magnificent plumage, very dark, the light borders to the breast feathers being much restricted.

My attention was first attracted to a raised place along the culmen, just in front of the nostrils, which, as it was flecked with blood, I supposed was caused by a shot lodging within the bill, but closer examination showed the protuberance was a natural growth. This is about .75 long, rounding off at the front, about .13 high in the middle, and .25 in the widest part. The hind head is streaked on either side with a beautiful green, while the clin close to the under mandible is marked by a sharply defined circular brown spot nearly as large as a silver half dollar.

This Duck measured a strong twenty-five inches in length, and was proportionally large, weighing some time after being taken three pounds and three ounces. It is now in our private collection, where all are welcome to examine it.

## A DOVEKIE INLAND AND ITS SAD FATE.

Prof. W. L. Powers, of Gardiner, reports a peculiar incident—perhaps we should have said accident—wherein a Dovekie (*alle alle*), a strictly maritime bird and the smallest of sea fowl, came to an untimely end in that city. This little sea pigeon evidently wandered or was driven by a storm inland from the sea.

At Gardiner the ice harvesters had cleared a place on the Kennebec for ice cutting, and it showed clear black ice in sharp contrast to the rest of the snow-covered river. The bird without doubt supposed he spied some open water wherein he could rest and feed, and dove for it, as he had been accustomed to do. There could be but one result when his tiny frame came in contact with the hard ice. The breath was driven from his wee, chunky body and he was found dead by some passers-by.

There must have been a flight of these interesting little birds, for this occurrence elsewhere has been reported. One was blown ashore at Cape Elizabeth so exhausted that he allowed his capturers to take possession of him without resistance, and they enjoyed their odd visitor over night, allowing him to enter the surf the next day and swim to sea.

ED.

#### WINTER BIRD NOTES FROM CENTRAL MAINE.

Winter birds have been very scarce in the interior of the State this winter. A few small flocks of Redpolls have been seen, also a few Siskins, but no Grosbeaks or Crossbills have been reported to date (Jan. 30). A few Crows have been seen occasionally.

ROBINS WINTERING IN SOMERSET CO.—Late in December, while in Starks, I saw a Robin feeding on some vines. It flew down by a mill and circled back to its feeding grounds. Later a teacher there told me she had seen five Robins about town all winter. The day I saw them it was snowing and was below zero weather. January 5th, a teacher in Skowhegan sent word that she saw a Robin the 4th in town. Several people have seen two Robins about town. Last week they were seen. The thermometer has registered 46 degrees below zero. Pretty cold for Robins to stay so far north!

PURPLE FINCH.—Tuesday, Jan. 17, saw a Purple Finch (*carpodacus purpureus*) feeding at Solon. It flew to a pine tree beside the road. I watched it some time at close quarters. The thermometer registered 15 degrees below.

SNOWY OWL.—Saw a Snowy Owl along electric line between Skowhegan and Madison Jan. 17th. The next day I saw a fine white specimen at rooms of Dan. A. Wendall, a taxidermist in No. New Portland. Mr. Bernard Gibbs, of Madison, shot the bird near Madison. A Snowy Owl was shot last week in New Vineyard, and one was seen near Kingfield the same week.

January 19th, very cold, snowing and drifting in forenoon, saw a Goshawk perched on a limb between Starks and Madison.

January 28th, while on electrics between Fairfield and Benton Falls, I saw three Snowflakes, the first ones I've seen since early

in December. In November and early in December they were seen in large flocks, but since extreme cold weather came I have not seen or heard of any until to-day.

J. M. SWAIN.

SKOWHEGAN, MAINE, Jan. 30, 1905.

#### ROBINS WINTERING IN MAINE.

As we were driving near Starks to-day, February 2d, we saw five Robins (*merula migratoria*) in an orchard. They flew to a small patch of evergreen near by. They seemed as lively and cheerful as though they were new arrivals in springtime.

J. M. SWAIN.

SKOWHEGAN, Feb. 2, 1905.

If there has heretofore been any doubt about Robins wintering in Maine, this year it can be dispelled, as the above brief report is from one of our keenest and most reliable observers of bird life. The flock of five herein mentioned is in all probability the same flock mentioned by one other observer in the same locality, and these Starks Robins will form an interesting bit of local bird history to hand down to the rising generation of ornithologists. ED.

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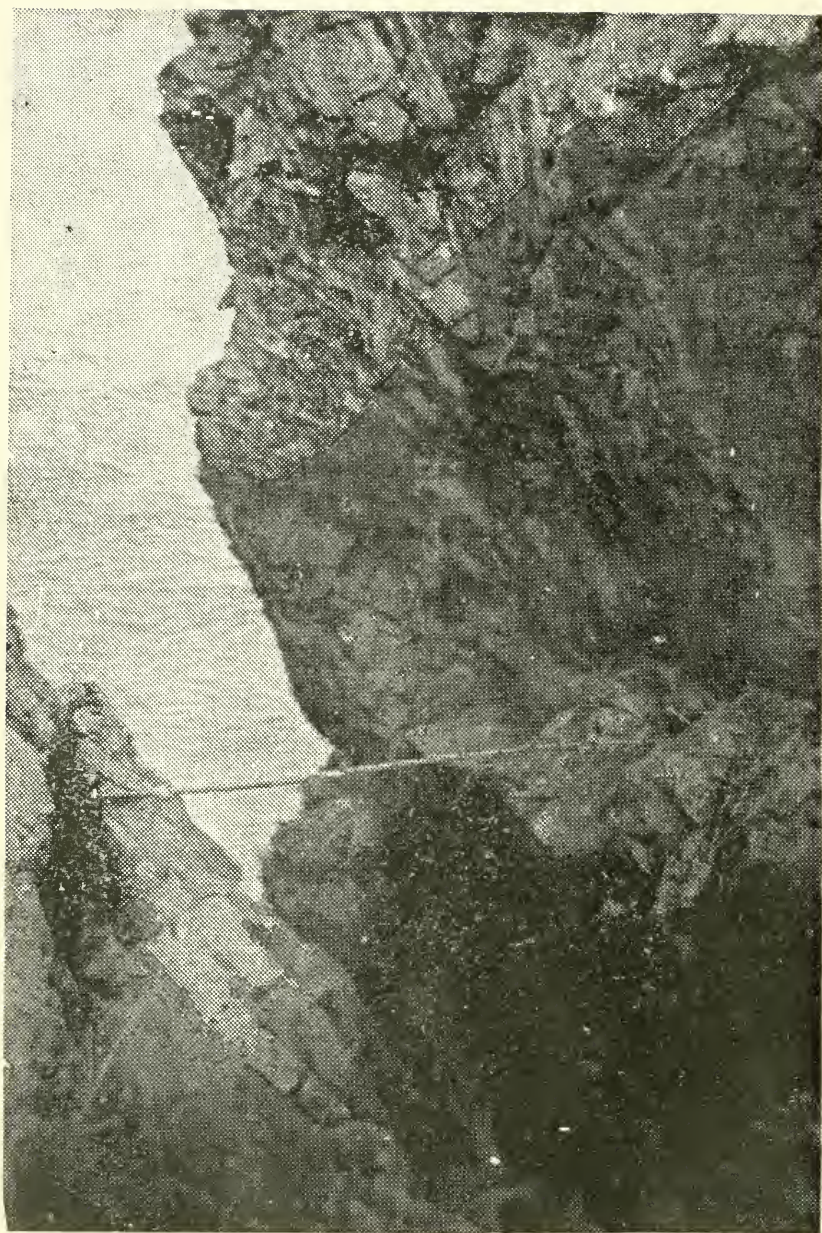
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Location of Nest of Northern Raven on Campobello Island, just across the Maine Border. Securing an egg by the aid of a tin cup tied on the end of a long pole reaching across an impassable chasm.

# The Journal of the Maine Ornithological Society

Published by the Society on the first of March, June, September and December

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Vol. VII

JUNE, 1905

No. 2

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## Notes on the Birds of the Lower Dead River.

Read at the Annual Meeting at Bangor, Nov. 25, 1904.

By J. MERTON SWAIN.

Having spent ten days at Dead River Dam, on the lower Dead River, I had opportunity to study a few birds that do not usually come under one's observation in the more thickly settled parts of our State. Nothing new or startling will here be recorded, but I will mention the birds that came under my notice while in this region.

On October 21st, with a party of three other sportsmen, we took the train at Kingfield at 6.15 P. M. for Carribasset station, and from there took the stage for Dead River post office.

The next morning we took a canoe down the river for Long Falls. As we were putting the canoe into the water, we heard the old familiar call of the Greater Yellow-legs (*Totanus melanoleucus*) (Gmel.), and far over the low meadow land we saw eight of them gyrating as though they were lost. I at once began to whistle them in, and they answered back and came on up to us within easy range. We very frequently put up a single or a pair of Black Duck (*Anas obscura*) (Gmel.) from out the numerous mouths of the brooks and lagoons. Song Sparrows were very plenty along the shores, and an occasional White-throated Sparrow and a few White-crowned Sparrows were seen along the way. Muskrats were very commonly seen swimming along the smooth surface of the water or skulking along the steep banks of the shores. A few Crows were seen in the heavy woods that lined the river banks the most of the way. As we

reached the head of Long Falls, and as we were about to land our canoe, we saw on the bank, near the camp, four deer lying on the ground, left by sportsmen, and it was then that we were first introduced to the Canada Jay (*Perisoreus canadensis*) (Linn.), for several were hanging around the dead deer. As we approached they skulked off into the dense growth of spruce and firs.

After getting dinner at the camp, we carried our canoe and packs by the Long Falls. We saw a fresh moose track in the tote road, but did not see his lordship. After putting our canoe into the river at the foot of the falls, we proceeded down to the dam. A few Bluebirds were seen on the telephone wires at the Jewett farm, and an occasional Winter Wren was seen or heard along the banks as we wended our way down the smooth surface of the river.

Fresh works of the beaver were very frequently seen, and now and then some would glide noiselessly around a turn in the river. We came on to a beaver, who, when he saw us, flapped his tail vigorously on the water and down beneath the surface he very quickly disappeared, spattering the water high in the air as he flapped his tail, thus making a noise that would startle one. It sounding as loud as though someone threw a large stone from the bank into the water. While the beaver does not belong to class aves, yet to me it was one of the most interesting animals that I came in contact with while in that region. Our guide took us to several completed dams, and I was surprised at the number of beavers that were living along the river, and also at the cunning ingenuity of such animals. These dams were very nicely made and very effective. One dam, the guide told us, probably flowed eighty acres of land, but none of the lagoons that were flowed back, so far as we could learn, did any damage to the timber land. There were large houses there, too, with logs and limbs thickly strewn in front of their hut, presumably for a platform for the inmates to climb up on out of the water, where they could stay and sun themselves. We saw quantities of poplar trees that they had gnawed off and that had fallen over into the river. They cut them up into sections and float them to where they want them. Then they sink them



to the bottom of the river. Just how, no one seems to know, but they do it by some ingenious contrivance and make them lie on the bottom of the river, and I am told that if disturbed they will quickly rise up from the bottom. They gnaw off the poplar bark for food for winter use. We measured trees felled by beavers that were sixteen inches through. Their houses were much larger than I had supposed them to be. Four of us stood upon one of them and it was as solid as a cradle knoll. We spent considerable time in examining their works, and the dams they had built.

It was never our privilege to get into a locality where the Ruffed Grouse were so abundant. All that we examined were clearly of the Gray type (*Togata*). There was about an acre of cleared land at the dam where the camps were, and it was very common to see Grouse come out to the edge of the plowed ground and stand and look at us as unconcerned as a flock of domestic hens might do. They were usually in flocks, not having been disturbed by man, and as we came on to a flock they did not fly, but would hop up on to a bush, or a log or stone and look us over in amazement.

Back away from the river in the dense clumps of spruce were to be found the Canada Grouse (*Dendragapus canadensis*) (Linn.), sometimes occurring in flocks, but usually a single bird or two or three would hop up on a limb and look unconcerned at us, with no thought of flight or apparently without knowledge of fear. One could throw sticks at them as they sat upon a limb, and unless a stick struck very near they would not stir a step. We found the Spruce Partridge very much more abundant than I had expected to find them, and there was every evidence that they breed there.

The American Sheldrake (*Merganser americanus*) (Cass.) was seen on the river and near the mouth of the numerous lagoons during our stay there.

Two Great Blue Herons (*Ardea herodias*) (Linn.) were seen feeding in one of the lagoons near the camps. We saw several Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers while there, and the Downy and Northern Hairy Woodpeckers were very plenty. Both representatives of

the Three-toed species were there, but in not very plentiful numbers, in fact not near so plenty as we found them at Lake Onawa (Piscataquis County) on a former hunting trip. The Pileated Woodpecker was very common there, often seen on the telephone poles and feeding on the dead tops in the Tamarac swamps.

Of the Finches, quantities of Red Crossbills (*Loxia curvirostra minor*) (Brehm) were seen. Small flocks of Goldfinches were seen daily, feeding on the birch cones. Pine Siskins were there in abundance. Both varieties of the Nuthatch were observed, but *Canadensis* was very common.

Golden Crowned Kinglets (*Regulus satrapa*) were everywhere abundant (little birch birds, as our guide called them). Several Hermit Thrushes were seen in the woods about us and along the banks of the river, and two Swainson's Thrushes (*Turdus ustulatus swainsonii*) (Cub.) were seen one bright day near the Grand Falls, just below the dam. This was rather late for the Olive-back to be staying there (Oct. 23).

A quite large colony of Robins were still staying about the clearing around the camps, and were still there when we came away. Several mornings the ground was white with frost, and one morning the ground was covered with about an inch of snow, yet these hardy Robins did not appear to have any idea of going south, though I had not seen any Robins down river for several days before we went into camp.

On Sept. 21st the guide came in late. It was snowing hard, but proved only a squall of short duration, but was very cold. After lighting a fire and the lamps, he noticed a small bird had flown in through a crack in the camp wall and was fluttering about a window. He caught it and it proved to be a Tree Swallow. He took it to the door and let it go, but *Bicolor* looked out into the cold, dark world and had no idea of going out into the cheerless elements, and fluttered back into the camp and remained all night. In the morning he let it go and it flew off up the river. It seemed to be a young-of-the-year bird, and for some cause did not get away with his associates when they had started on their long journey southward.



Canada Jays were very abundant everywhere. Quite a colony were hanging about the camp, and everywhere in the woods. As one goes trailing after deer, these interesting birds, one or two of them, are pretty sure to drop down near you, look you over, scold you a bit and silently scale along a rod or more in search for food. They are not usually favorites with campers or woodsmen, yet anything for bird life during the long, cold winter is agreeable. Chickadees were flitting about everywhere. One solitary Snowflake (*Plectrophenax nivalis*) (Linn) was seen on Oct. 25th in a large tract of burnt land, along the Spencer Stream. It was perched on a dead twig as we came up to it early in the morning, and allowed us to nearly pick it up before it flew a few feet away. Juncos were common everywhere. The Blue Jay was not very plenty, not near as abundant as was *Canadensis*.

One afternoon, as one of the party and myself were following the trail campwards (we were very wet and it was raining hard), we very unexpectedly came on to a doe that stood under a thick clump of firs, looking at us. As we caught sight of her, she jumped into the thick woods at about two leaps. As she started, both rifles came up and the two shots rang out on the heavy air and the doe kept on her way unharmed. As we looked at each other in amazement (and amusement, too), a Canada Jay dropped into the bushes beside us and scolded vigorously, then broke out into a low laugh, evidently at our surprise at not stopping the doe at so easy a range, or else he was much amused at the poor shots we had proved ourselves to be.

While at the late date that we were in the Lower Dead River region it was too late for the migrant species, yet the species that we saw were very interesting. Moose were not uncommon there, while deer were very plenty, and with plenty of venison in camp, we spent a very pleasant ten days in that region. With keen appetites we came into camp for a hearty supper, and retired early and slept sound, breathing deep drafts of the air, heavy laden with the spruce and fir, amid the sound of the rush of the water through the sluiceways in the dam, the roar of the water over Grand Falls, a few rods

below, and the hooting of a pair of Great Horned Owls that hung about the vicinity of our camp, making our surroundings as wild and weird as possible.

### Northern Raven's Nest.

By CLARENCE H. CLARK, Lubec, Me.

Having had several inquiries at various times in reference to our Northern Raven, I have been quite careful in observing it, and have noticed that the number in this vicinity has been gradually decreasing and a former nesting-place, four miles from this village, was deserted several years ago. Last year I did not succeed in getting one positive record, but while out on a tramp Friday, April 14th, I saw a pair scaling about the place where I was and distinctly heard their call. This being their breeding season, I felt quite sure of their having a nest in that vicinity and soon I succeeded in finding it, as a short time after seeing them scaling above us one of our party was somewhat startled by one of the ravens flying out of a deep gulch directly beneath him, and there was the nest in an exceedingly picturesque place. The gulch was about 14 feet wide, 125 feet high and 200 feet deep. The nest was on a shelf just large enough to hold it and was 40 to 50 feet from the water beneath. It contained five eggs and was built in the regular manner, with the exception of the inner nest being much nicer than usual, consisting chiefly of fine moss, feathers and rabbit's fur. We lowered one of our party into the gulch by the means of a rope, and with a small dipper fastened to a pole, he secured one of the eggs for me (ravens are too scarce to take whole sets). I took several pictures of the nest and surroundings and mail one of the best. The pictures were taken with an ordinary 4x5, and then enlarged.

## Notes on the Warblers Found in Maine.

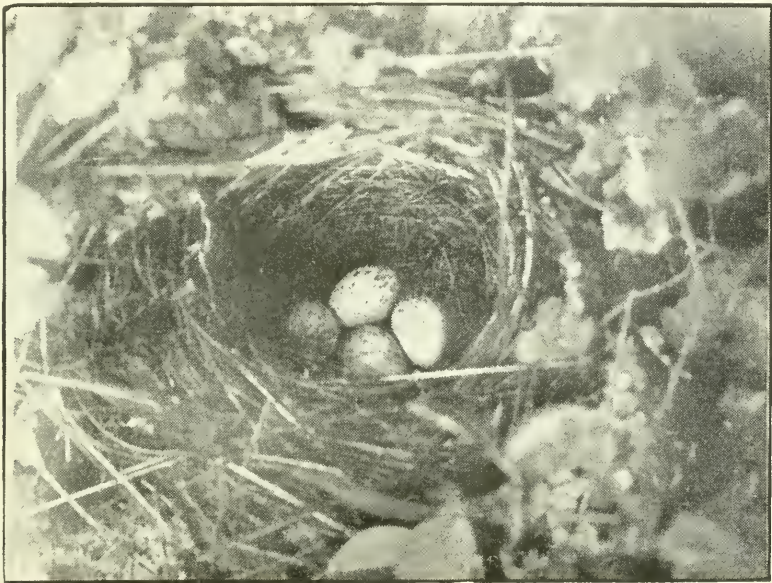
(Continued from p. 18.)

Contributions to the Life History of the Black and White Warbler.

*Mniotilta varia* (Linn.).

By EVERETT E. JOHNSON.

GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION.—This species winters in Southern Florida and Southern Texas, south through Mexico and Central America to Northern South America. In migration it is more



NEST AND EGGS OF BLACK AND WHITE WARBLER.

or less common in Eastern North America, west to the Rocky Mountains. It breeds from the southern boundary of the Carolinian life zone, from North Carolina to Kansas, north to New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Newfoundland, to the upper Mackenzie Valley, west regularly to central South Dakota, central Kansas and central Texas and rarely in Colorado and California.

The Black and White Warbler is an early migrant, arriving in the vicinity of Lewiston about the first week in May. April 30th is

my earliest spring record and Sept. 25th my latest fall record. In this vicinity it is a common migrant and a few pairs remain to breed. It is interesting to watch one of these creeper-like Warblers as he lights on the lower part of the trunk of a tree and works up in a jerking manner in a spiral direction along the trunk and larger limbs till, getting pretty well up, it flies to a neighboring tree and



BLACK AND WHITE WARBLER ON NEST.

repeats the movements. It reminds one very much [of the Brown Creeper. Not only does this bird attract the eye, but its soft musical song is equally attractive and pleasing to the ear.

I discovered my first nest of this species in Lewiston June 17, 1898. While descending a steep bank in a small strip of woods beside a brook, a female flushed from near by under my feet, and after a few minutes' search I found the nest in the edge of some brush at the foot of a small hemlock tree. The nest was loosely con-



structed of pine needles, leaves and shreds of bark, lined with fine roots and horsehair, and contained three young and one egg with the side crushed. The eggs of this species average .65x.55 inches. This pair seem to be attached to this place, as I have found them breeding there several seasons since. May 17th, 1901, I saw a pair building near this place—the same pair probably. The nest was of the usual material, situated on the bank under the edge of a blueberry bush. May 26th there was one egg of the cowbird in it, which I removed. May 30th, four eggs had been laid, and I exposed two plates on the female sitting on the nest, but, as they were a failure, June 1st more were exposed on the bird and also on the nest and eggs, with better results. This bird was very tame, allowing me to set the camera up and focus at a distance of two and a half feet, while she was sitting on the nest. June 12th the young had hatched and June 16th I took a picture of them. I also exposed plates on both male and female feeding the young, but the light was too poor to make a success. The male was not nearly as tame as the female. June 22nd the young had left the nest and were seen with the parent birds in that vicinity.

### Migration Reports, 1903.

Reports for the year 1903 were made by the following members, at their respective stations:

W. H. Brownson, Portland, Cumberland Co. -

Everett E. Johnson, East Hebron, Oxford Co.

Mabel P. Ridley, Castine, Hancock Co.

Dana W. Sweet, Avon, Franklin Co.

There was an unusually early spring this year, followed by a drouth of remarkable severity during April and May. Birds arriving during March and April came much earlier than usual.

D. W. SWEET.

	1903.			
	PORTLAND.	E. HEBRON.	CASTINE.	AVON.
Loon,	April 30			
Red-throated Loon,	Oct. 25			
Canada Goose,		March 20	April 30	
Yellow Rail,	" 4			
American Coot,				April 14
American Woodcock,		" 25		
Pectoral Sandpiper,	Aug. 23			
Least Sandpiper,	" 9			
Red-backed Sandpiper,	Oct. 24			
Sanderling,	Sept. 27			
Greater Yellow-legs,	Aug. 30			
Yellow-legs,	" 23			
Solitary Sandpiper,	" 30			
Spotted Sandpiper,	May 7	May 10		May 9
Black-bellied Plover,	Oct. 24			
Semipalmated Plover,	Aug. 9			
Marsh Hawk,		March 29		Aug. 21
Sharp-shinned Hawk,	April 12			May 3
Cooper's Hawk,		April 8		" 4
American Goshawk,		Nov. 30		
Red-tailed Hawk,				" 17
Red-shouldered Hawk,	March 22	March 20		
Broad-winged Hawk,				" 19
Pigeon Hawk,				" 13
Sparrow Hawk,	April 25	May 2		
Fish Hawk,				April 23
Black-billed Cuckoo,		" 17	May 30	
Belted Kingfisher,			Sept. 22	" 25
Hairy Woodpecker,			Oct. 2	Resident
Arctic Three-toed Woodpecker,			" 3	
Yellow-bellied Woodpecker,	April 22		Sept. 29	April 10
Red-headed Woodpecker,	Sept. 18			
Flicker,	March 30	March 14	April 11	" 10
Whip-poor-will,		May 11		May 7
Nighthawk,	May 20	April 11		" 21
Chimney Swift,	" 9	May 14	May 2	" 7
Ruby-throated Humming Bird,	" 17			June 5
Kingbird,	" 16	" 14	" 21	May 12
Crested Flycatcher,				" 12
Phoebe,	March 29	March 26	March 22	March 25
Olive-sided Flycatcher,	May 16			May 22
Wood Pewee,	" 25	May 30	May 29	" 19
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher,			" 21	
Alder Flycatcher,	" 22			" 25
Least Flycatcher,	" 9	" 11	" 12	" 6
Horned Lark,	Nov. 13			



## PORTLAND. E. HEBRON. CASTINE. AVON.

Prairie Horned Lark,				Oct. 22
Canada Jay,				Nov. 12
Bobolink,	May 15	May 10	May 18	May 14
Cowbird,		March 21		March 21
Red-winged Blackbird,	March 18	" 19		" 23
Meadow Lark,	April 19			
Baltimore Oriole,	May 27	May 18	" 21	May 14
Rusty Blackbird,			Oct. 2	
Bronzed Grackle,	April 11	March 20	April 14	" 24
Pine Grosbeak,	Nov. 1	Oct. 27	Oct. 30	Oct. 25
Purple Finch,	April 23	March 27	April 1	March 22
American Crossbill,	June 6		May 30	
White-winged Crossbill,	Nov. 1			
Redpoll,	Dec. 6	Nov. 30	Nov. 26	Nov. 12
Pine Siskin,	Nov. 1			
Snow Bunting,	Oct. 24	Dec. 12		
Vesper Sparrow,	April 19	April 22	April 28	April 11
Ipswich Sparrow,	Oct. 24			
Savanna Sparrow,	April 26		" 14	" 12
Acadian Sharp-tailed Sparrow,	Oct. 4			
White-crowned Sparrow,	May 22	May 25	May 2	
White-throated Sparrow,	" 2	" 3	" 9	May 2
Tree Sparrow,			April 2	March 16
Chipping Sparrow,	April 22	April 9	" 29	April 26
Field Sparrow,	" 22	" 24		May 3
Slate-colored Junco,	March 12	March 14	March 13	March 18
Song Sparrow,	" 14	" 15	" 20	" 19
Swamp Sparrow,	Sept. 16			
Fox Sparrow,	March 15	" 27	April 2	
Towhee,	May 20			
Rose-breasted Grosbeak,	" 19	May 22	May 21	May 12
Indigo Bunting,	" 20	July 1		May 20
Scarlet Tanager,				" 17
Purple Martin,		May 17		" 12
Cliff Swallow,	" 11	" 17	May 18	" 12
Barn Swallow,	" 9	April 24	" 11	April 30
Tree Swallow,	April 19	" 21	April 18	" 11
Bank Swallow,				May 12
Cedar Waxwing,	May 22	May 30	May 29	" 29
Northern Shrike,		Dec. 25		
Loggerhead Shrike,	April 19			April 30
Red-eyed Vireo,	May 22	May 24	" 21	May 18
Yellow-throated Vireo,				" 21
Blue-headed Vireo,	" 9			" 10
Black and White Warbler,	" 7	" 3	" 9	" 3
Nashville Warbler,	" 9		" 21	" 8
Northern Parula Warbler,	" 14	" 7		" 8
Yellow Warbler,	" 15	" 15	" 11	

	PORTLAND.	E. HEBRON.	CASTINE.	AVON.
Black-throated Blue Warbler,	May 14			May 12
Myrtle Warbler,	April 21	May 3	April 30	April 29
Magnolia Warbler,	May 10		May 19	May 10
Chestnut-sided Warbler,	" 13	" 18		" 12
Black-poll Warbler,	" 16		" 20	
Blackburnian Warbler,	" 25			" 14
Black-throated Green Warbler,	" 7	" 10	" 9	" 3
Pine Warbler,	April 5	April 30		
Yellow Palm Warbler,	" 21	May 2	April 29	
Ovenbird,	May 13	" 10		" 10
Water Thrush,	" 19			" 10
Mourning Warbler,				" 22
Northern Yellow-throat,	" 8	" 18	May 18	" 11
Wilson's Warbler,	" 21			
Canadian Warbler,	" 21		" 21	" 15
American Redstart,	" 15	" 22	" 16	" 9
American Pipit,	Oct. 25		" 2	
Catbird,	May 17	" 15	" 29	" 22
Brown Thrasher,	" 13	" 7		" 27
Winter Wren,	Oct. 11	Oct. 10		April 10
Ruby-crowned Kinglet,			April 29	" 26
Veery,	May 17	April 26		May 19
Olive-backed Thrush,	" 17			" 22
Hermit Thrush,	April 5	" 12		April 12
American Robin,	March 11	March 11	March 13	Resident
Bluebird,	" 10	" 12	" 13	March 11

Mr. O. W. Knight, of Bangor, promises an article on the Myrtle Warbler for the next issue of the JOURNAL. For this purpose he requests reports of observations regarding the nesting and incubation period of this Warbler, also notes regarding the time of feathering required for the young and the time they remain in the nest. Let all our members take notice.

ABUNDANCE OF WARBLERS.—During the spring migration just over, the flights of Warblers were noticeably large and some of the species, usually rare, were abundant. The Blackburnian Warbler was seen in the vicinity of Portland in considerable numbers on several days in succession. Canadian Warblers were plentiful, likewise the Black-poll, Black-throated Blue and Wilson's Warblers. On the morning of May 14th I saw the Bay-breasted Warbler, in company with a flock of his family, which had arrived that day.

W. H. BROWNSON.

# The Journal

of the

## Maine Ornithological Society

A Quarterly Magazine Devoted to the Study and Protection of Birds

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No. 2

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SUBSCRIPTION RATES: 50 cents a year; 15 cents a copy

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Associate Editor

---

The members of the Maine Ornithological Society do not approve the action of the Legislature in removing the protection of the law from the Blue Heron and the Kingfisher, and they do not believe there was any necessity for such action. It is doubtless true that these birds destroy some fish, but not so many that it was right to expose them to indiscriminate slaughter. It is to be hoped that the next Legislature will restore them to the list of protected birds, perhaps allowing the fish wardens to kill those actually found doing harm to the hatcheries. Meanwhile let each member who lives near a Heron colony do all in his power by moral suasion to save the birds from needless destruction.

The need of new members of the Maine Ornithological Society is painfully apparent. The urgent demands for work on the part of the present active members in procuring additions have not been met, except in one or two notable instances. Each member should send in at least one new name during the coming month. Each member whose dues have not been paid should attend to that matter promptly, as there is no money in the treasury now, and cash is needed to pay for the printing of this number. The income should be large enough to warrant printing a journal of double the size of this issue.

## Bird Notes.

Notes and observations upon bird life within our State are earnestly desired from all our readers for publication in this column, and should be sent to the Associate Editor, Frank T. Noble, Augusta, Maine.

KINGFISHER AND ENGLISH SPARROW.—Mr. B. B. Wentworth, an observer of bird life, reports witnessing a Kingfisher destroying and eating the young of the English Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*). The incident related occurred beneath his office window in the City Building at Augusta, overlooking the river bank.

The Kingfisher would visit the Sparrow's nest, and, taking one of the newly hatched young, would carry it to a limb of a willow tree and there devour it calmly, although surrounded by a number of vigorously protesting Sparrows.

This is the first instance of the kind that has been brought to our notice, and if *Ceryle alcyon* could be depended upon to continue this good work, we would advocate colonizing a quantity of them in this vicinity, where the Sparrows are a great nuisance. E.D.

YELLOW-THROATED VIREO AT WESTBROOK.—The Yellow-throated Vireo has been so little observed in Maine as to warrant the generalization of being the "Rarest of our Vireos except the Philadelphia."

It is a denizen of the tree tops, a leisurely gleaner in the uppermost foliage. To the unpracticed, or careless, its song would hardly be distinguished from that of the Red-eyed, though in tone there is a striking difference. Though quite widely distributed in Maine, its appearance seems noteworthy wherever it appears.

On May 12, 1902, I secured a male in Westbrook, and at the same place, on May 17, Mrs. Norton identified another bird of the same species.

No particular search was made the following spring. In the fall, however, Sept. 9, 1903, one was found dead by the side of a building in Westbrook and brought to me.

On May 22, 1904, attracted by its song, Mrs. Norton and myself positively identified one of these birds in a shaded section of a

street of Westbrook, and had some reason to believe that it had been there for a week.

From this time I noted it almost daily until July 1, after which it became silent or removed. Its range seemed to be very much limited, i. e., confined to a particular part of the street, and not heard away from that. During this period, at two other points, both well separated, two others were heard on several occasions.

After all, shall we not find this *Vireo* less rare than has been believed?

A. H. NORTON.

RED PHALAROPES ASHORE.—On Sept. 26, 1904, I found and secured a Red Phalarope at Westbrook, Me., six miles inland. The bird, in nearly full fall plumage, was alone, and swimming in the Presumpscot River.

Upon Oct. 7, 1905, in company with Mr. W. H. Brownson, I took another upon Old Orchard Beach. This bird had not as nearly completed its fall moult. When first seen it was upon the beach, evidently feeding upon the drifted seaweed. As soon as alarmed it flew to the sea and lighted there for a few minutes, but returned to the beach, where it was secured. Both were very much emaciated.

A. H. NORTON.

NOTES ON THE BOBOLINK AND CLIFF SWALLOW.—The first Bobolinks arrived in Bangor on May 17th. Only one flock was observed, and this contained some two hundred individuals, all male birds. These were grouped in a clump of willow bushes some three miles out of the city, near what is known as the Bicycle Path. Each individual bird was taking his part in a very animated discussion of some very important question, as judged from the Bobolink point of view, and not only was every individual voicing his sentiments but also indulging in wild gestures with wings, tail and head into the faces of every near neighbor of his kind. All kinds of harsh, untuneful and out-of-time cries and notes were mingled with occasional brief utterances of a few notes of the typical Bobolink song. Although considerable likely territory was covered during the afternoon, no other Bobolinks were seen, and it is quite likely



that this flock was the forerunner of the Bobolink tribe. Do the males always arrive before the females? It has been my experience in past years that this is *probably* the case.

Soon after leaving the Bobolink caucus numerous Cliff Swallows were noticed. They, too, had just arrived from their southern abodes, and, judging by appearances, they were exceedingly fatigued. They were perched by hundreds in low shrubs and bushes between the Bicycle Path and a flooded meadow just beyond. Some small willow bushes were each occupied by fifty or more Swallows, whose drooping, half-spread wings and open beaks, through which they drew spasmodic gasps of air, were a most eloquent testimonial of the fact that they had just arrived from a long journey and were exceedingly fatigued.

O. W. KNIGHT.

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We have received from the publishers, at the request of the author, a copy of Ralph Hoffmann's "A Guide to the Birds of New England and Eastern New York," with a letter asking for a review of the same. Our space is limited this time, but a long notice need not be written to make apparent to our readers the value of this book. For the use of a beginner we regard this volume far and away the best that the book market now affords. It is intended principally as a help to identification, and for this purpose it has high merit. It tells clearly and with scientific accuracy the field marks by which each bird may be recognized, just the little points of peculiarity that we all employ in telling at a glance what bird we have under our glasses. It does not take the place of Chapman's Handbook, but it admirably supplements it. A student who has the Handbook would do well to get Hoffmann's Guide. Every owner of Hoffmann's Guide may have perfect confidence that he will not be misled by it, and he may follow the suggestions given in it with pleasure and profit.

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A Guide to the Birds of New England and Eastern New York, by Ralph Hoffmann. 12mo, pp. 357. Houghton, Mifflin & Co., Boston. Price, \$1.50 net.

# The Journal of the Maine Ornithological Society

Published by the Society on the first of March, June, September and December

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Vol. VII

SEPTEMBER, 1905

No. 3

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## Matinicus Sea Birds at the Close of the Nesting Season.

By W. H. BROWNSON.

August 22nd Mr. Arthur H. Norton, of Portland, and I sailed from Rockland on the steamer W. G. Butman for Matinicus, for a hurried observation of the sea birds which there abound, at the very close of the nesting season, when most of the young birds are able to fly and care for themselves. This is the most remarkable bird locality on the coast of Maine, for at no other point can so many birds of so many different species, both native and migrating, be seen at the same time. And it should be remembered that this is a busy fishing harbor, though it is located some eighteen or twenty miles out to sea from the mainland.

When we were some eight or ten miles from land we began to encounter little flocks of Sea Geese or Jersey Geese. Northern Phalaropes they are properly called and they were now migrating from northern summer homes to spend the winter out at sea, living on the insects and bits of vegetable life to be gathered from floating patches of seaweed. They were swimming gracefully, and as the steamer drew too near would rise without effort and fly to one side, wheeling and twisting near the surface of the water before selecting another place to light. They are handsome at this season of the year, though wearing their winter plumage, which is not so brilliantly marked as during the breeding time. Queer little wanderers they are, which never come ashore from now until spring, unless

driven to land by some strong wind or long continued storm. Mere atoms of life, they ride free on the waves and shake the salt drops from their backs when the gale showers them with spray.

At Matinicus we made arrangements to stay several days and visit the neighboring islands. The same afternoon we went over to No Man's Land to see the great colony of Herring Gulls. The account of this trip will be found at the close of this article, reprinted in part from the account furnished by me to the Portland Advertiser.

On No Man's Land, while we were in the midst of the Gulls, we saw a remarkable sight for this locality, no less than thirty-seven Double-crested Cormorants, just now on their journey to more southern waters, from northern breeding grounds. They sat in a grotesque row on a projecting cliff, and allowed Mr. Norton to creep around the side of a ledge and photograph them, though at some distance. During our stay in the locality we often saw them flying singly or in pairs around the inner harbor.

Black Guillemots, or Sea Pigeons, had been breeding here in considerable numbers, doubtless on several of the islands. We saw them on Two Bush island, Woodenball island and elsewhere. They were the most numerous on Woodenball island, where we saw one morning more than twenty-five adult birds. Their nests were in the crevices of the rocks and doubtless more young birds were concealed there than we saw of the old ones. We observed only one young Sea Pigeon and he was in the harbor within a few feet of the wharf, and right under the bow of the steamer as she was making ready to leave for Rockland.

We spent one night on Woodenball island, sleeping part of the time in the camp of a fisherman and the rest of the hours after twilight and just after dawn searching for Leach's Petrels, in their nests and watching them come in from sea to feed their young. It was nine o'clock at night and completely dark when the Petrels began to arrive. They flew around our heads like bats, being just distinguishable by starlight as they chattered and whinnied in the vicinity of their homes, tunneled under boulders and under stone

walls. We found the nests so deep that we could not reach to the bottom of them. The young birds were mostly beyond our grasp, but once in a while one could be touched with the hand, after the outer earth had been scooped away. The odor which they emit from their mouths when in any way disturbed was plainly evident around the nests and in this way, after practice, one can tell pretty accurately whether the nest is occupied. It is a smell something like musk and quite pungent. On this island there were a good many of the birds, but by no means the extensive colony which we had expected to find.

While we were landing on Woodenball we saw two Northern Ravens, which flew directly over our heads almost within gunshot. They are regular visitors to the island, so the fishermen say. We found a place where they had been rooting up the turf in a search for beetles, a common practice of the bird, it is understood. On No Man's Land we saw two nests of the Northern Raven, and it is very likely that here is where the two that we saw were raised.

Just as we were leaving Woodenball island, in the morning after our night with the Petrels, we saw on the southern cliffs a company of Great Black-backed Gulls, recent arrivals in that section, and counted something over thirty of the big fellows, who looked as large as sheep as they were outlined against the sky. They spend the cold months on the outer shores, being regular winter residents in sparing numbers, this being the largest flock that had been seen within the recollection of good observers around these islands.

Matinicus Rock is five miles farther out at sea than Matinicus island. Here is where the famous lighthouse is located, and here is where some 6000 Arctic Terns breed in season. The young birds were gone when we were there, and there were not over 500 terns around the rock. They scatter all up and down the coast, in search of fruitful fishing grounds. This season, during the long rainstorm in the time when the eggs were just hatching, many young birds perished and many incubated eggs were spoiled. We looked in vain for the Puffins, or Sea Parrots, six or more of which were here in the

breeding season. They had been seen within a day or two, but had now left in quest of better feeding grounds. We ate dinner with one of the keepers of the lights and saw many eggs just as they had been left by the birds after the rain had rendered them useless. As we rowed back to Matinicus in Captain Young's dory we saw quite a number of Ruddy Turnstones on the sea weed which covered the outer rocks where the waves frequently broke in foam.

### THE GULLS OF NO MAN'S LAND.

W. H. BROWNSON in the Portland Advertiser.

After we had taken dinner we started off to find Captain Mark Young, the well-known warden in the employ of the National Audubon society, who takes excellent care of all the immense number of sea birds in this cluster of islands. Now Captain Young's aid was really necessary if we expected to see the most interesting things which here abound. He owns a dory, he is a seaman of long experience, he knows all the best landing places on the rocky islands, he is moreover the sole proprietor of No Man's Land, which boasts of the densest colony of Herring Gulls on the Maine coast. There may be more birds on Great Duck island, off Mount Desert, but they are not so thickly gathered in a limited area. Dropping his work, without a moment's delay, Captain Young announced himself ready for the row over to the Gull colony, and thus we set out in his dory for what proved to be the greatest sight in the bird line that had ever fallen to my lot. On Two Bush island, which lay directly in our path, a big flock of Gulls arose from a jutting ledge and I exclaimed at the unusual number, but my companions smiled quietly and remarked that we had not yet begun to see Gulls. Thus we approached No Man's Land and I soon felt well repaid for my visit, even if not another bird should be seen while we remained.

Young Gulls and old Gulls were everywhere. This island is some twelve acres in extent and it did not seem that there was a square yard of it which did not hold one or more birds. One side of the island is sparsely covered with turf and the other is given up to a growth of stunted black spruce trees. Gulls; white and dark,



roosted on every rock, covering also all the grassland. Up in the trees big white birds had alighted on the bare branches, one above the other, forming a series of terraces of living and glistening forms. As we drew near we saw several of the Great Black-backed Gulls sitting with the others, merely visitors it seemed, for these big fellows had bred farther north and were now coming south to spend the winter on the outer shores along the coast. Captain Young steered for Rumguzzle cove, the elegant name applied to a wonderful natural inlet, a depression of the high rocky formation of the island, nearly cutting it in two. Here it is related how a drunken crew from the West Indies was wrecked and drowned, while a big cask of rum went ashore on the rocks and landed high and dry in this cove, where it was afterwards rescued by the neighboring fishermen. The place served our purpose now, but it was no easy task to get out of the boat on the ledges without getting wet. It could not have been done without the aid of so skillful a boatman as Captain Young.

Now the wonder of the scene opened before us. We were right in the midst of the Gulls, which shrieked and barked over our heads, eyed us with suspicion from the cliffs on either hand, and fled in our pathway up to the highest point of the island. The young Gulls were there in thousands, being easily recognized by their brown plumage, while the adult birds were a glossy white. Captain Young put the difference before us in his pithy way, when he remarked, "You see the dark ones,—well, sir, every one of them was an egg this spring." Now we began to thread our way among the gulls up the steep cleft in the rocks and our real experience began. Young Gulls, hardly able to fly, fled before us and tumbled down among the rocks with much weak flapping of wings. Picking themselves up they perched at a safe distance and regarded us with no look of favor. Over our heads swarmed more than a thousand adult Gulls, every white beak sending forth a discordant cry. On our left there was another thousand and on our right as many more, perched on the ledges, on the grass, and in the tops of the spruce trees. Down at our feet, in the water, was a bunch of birds that

must have numbered over a thousand, and as many more in sight in the water on the other side of the island. Besides these the farther ends of the rocks were still covered with Gulls out of observation and as yet resting easily, though as we progressed over the island they constantly rose over us in a threatening cloud.

"How many Gulls are there on the island?" I asked Captain Young and he replied confidently, "Well, sir, we estimate them at 10,000." This was surprising and I looked around me with a critical eye. But I could not contradict him, for that seemed to be a fair computation. I counted a section of the swimming flocks and judged that there were two or three thousand in the water, while the birds were as thick over our heads as a swarm of mosquitoes. There may be no more than six thousand birds, and there may be as many as twelve thousand; no one can say, for it is impossible to count them. Captain Young's estimate of ten thousand therefore, will have to stand undisputed, at least until more accurate information can be obtained. We saw not a single nest, but plenty of places where they had been built. Captain Young says the birds tear their nests to pieces as soon as they are done with them, but they are nothing but a collection of sticks and soft material placed on the ledges and grass ground and doubtless the young birds, during their growth, scatter what is of no further use to them. On the islands farther east Gulls often build their nests in trees, but we saw none of that kind here.

There is no breeding place for Herring Gulls nearer to Portland, and doubtless many of the Gulls seen around Portland harbor, spring and fall belong at No Man's Land and to Captain Young, who fondly claims ownership of them all, no matter where they are found. And the way he protects them is good to behold. Mind you, he owns the island on which they breed, and he is the warden selected by Mr. Dutcher, of the Audubon society, to see that they are not molested. Armed with this authority and being proprietor of their nesting ground, he has an immense advantage over the lawless hunter of eggs or pearly plumage. His big sign on the most conspicuous part of the island warns off any intruder, in language that cannot be misunderstood. Woe to the gunner who disregards that warning, for the strong hand of the law is likely to lay hold of him.

# The Journal

of the

## Maine Ornithological Society

A Quarterly Magazine Devoted to the Study and Protection of Birds

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### OFFICERS OF THE MAINE ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

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Many members are still neglecting to send in their dues. It should be remembered that it is not possible to print the JOURNAL and leave the printer unpaid. His patience is great, but it will not always last.

The migration report for 1904 is given in this issue. It shows more activity than formerly in this interesting branch of bird observation. This time eight members sent in reports. Doubtless there will be as many more in the 1905 report, and during the coming year the number might well be doubled. The member who takes systematic notes of the arrival and departure of the birds will soon have a series of records which will prove valuable, both to him and others, for frequent reference. Thus he can shortly learn just when to look for certain species, and he can be practically sure that their coming and going in his locality will not vary materially from year to year.

We have very little accurate data on the question of whether birds are increasing or decreasing in the State of Maine. It is certain that the sea birds, on account of their efficient protection, are multiplying rapidly. The land birds, for the most part, present a

more difficult problem. Edward Howe Forbush, the state ornithologist of Massachusetts, prepared for the fifty-second annual report of the Massachusetts State Board of Agriculture a "Special Report on the Decrease of Certain Birds and its Causes, with Suggestions for Bird Protection." This has now been printed as a separate pamphlet. Mr. Forbush obtained replies from over two hundred correspondents in different parts of the state, representing all sections. Ninety-four reported birds as decreasing; sixty-two reported them as holding their own or increasing; twenty reported that game birds are decreasing and song birds increasing or holding their own. Mr. Forbush concludes that with the smaller species the natural balance of bird life is now fairly constant in Massachusetts and the neighboring states, and that the decrease will be found mainly among those species which are hunted.

We herewith present the September number of the *Maine Journal*, and once more call attention to the need for more members and subscribers. These can be obtained only by the personal efforts of our present members, each one of whom ought to be interested enough in the work to secure at least one new name during the coming month. It is desired to print a larger *JOURNAL*, and to have it contain more matter that is of interest to the state at large. In order to do this it is necessary for most of our working members to furnish at least one article, or, at all events, a note once a year. This ought not to be a great tax on the time of even a busy man or woman. And this brings to mind the fact that our female members are not doing their share to make the *JOURNAL* interesting. There are some very able-working ornithologists in Maine, whose observations would be of great interest, and not a few of these are women. By all means, then, let us hear from the ladies within the next six weeks.

Mr. Ora W. Knight promised us an article on the Myrtle Warbler for this issue, but on account of the pressure of his other duties he has been unable to prepare it. Mr. J. Merton Swain then undertook to supply the need, but he, too, has been prevented from fur-

nishing it. Prof. Lee, our president, had partly written some bird notes, but did not find time to complete them. Prof. W. L. Powers was asked to send something, but the letter reached him just as he was starting for Seguin to spend a week with our ex-president, Capt. Spinney, and after that it is easily understood that he found labors enough to keep him busy from morning to night. For the December JOURNAL there will be additional solicitations, and it is to be hoped that the editor will not be obliged then to furnish practically all the matter.

## Bird Notes.

Notes and observations upon bird life within our State are earnestly desired from all our readers for publication in this column, and should be sent to the Associate Editor, Frank T. Noble, Augusta, Maine.

A THIRD CUMBERLAND COUNTY SPECIMEN OF THE CASPIAN TERN.—While recently examining the collection of Mr. J. A. Coolbroth, my attention was called to a Caspian Tern in full nuptial plumage. It was secured by Mr. Coolbroth several years ago near Richmond's Island, Cape Elizabeth, Me.

This is the third Cumberland County specimen known to be extant, one an immature bird from the same locality, being in the collections of the Portland Society of Natural History, Proc. Port. Soc., Vol. II, p. 104, and one in full nuptial plumage taken in Casco Bay, being in the museum of Bowdoin College, JOURNAL ME. ORNITH. SOC., Vol. IV, p. 3.

A. H. NORTON.

WILSON'S THRUSH—COWBIRD.—The associate editor observed this spring an unusual abandonment of a nest by a Wilson's Thrush (*Turdus fuscescens*), owing to a Cowbird having deposited an egg therein.

On June 1st, an exceedingly fine, though somewhat exposed, nest of this Thrush was found upon a side hill on the outskirts of Augusta. The female was on the nest, and upon being flushed two eggs were seen, but in no way disturbed, neither did we loiter in the vicinity.



On June 2d the nest was again visited, and it was seen that a Cowbird had deposited an egg therein. The Thrushes were nowhere to be seen, nor did they ever visit the locality again.

Comments by other observers upon this abandonment of nests for like causes would be of interest.

NOTES FROM FRANKLIN COUNTY.--The article in the March JOURNAL where mention is made of a Chickadee perching on a gun barrel reminded me of an incident that occurred last March. I was sawing wood when one of these interesting little birds flew from the woodpile and perched on my arm, near the shoulder. It looked inquiringly into my face without fear, and when through with the inspection flew to a near-by tree.

The Junco has never to my knowledge been accused of being an imitator of song birds, but last year the efforts of one to do so came under my observation. In passing a group of apple trees where several song sparrows were singing, I noticed one bird voice that seemed harsh and rather out of tune, yet apparently a song sparrow's note. On close examination, I discovered that the musical effort came from a Junco, who was evidently trying to imitate his distant relatives. There were the opening notes, the gurgles, the song sparrow trills that make up the song, all quite respectably rendered for an imitation. I would like to know if others have observed this trait.

On June 26, '05, I took, with a friend, a very early start for a trip through the woods, and it may be of interest to the JOURNAL'S readers to know that a few of our birds are decidedly early singers. We started at one o'clock in the morning. It was cloudy and very dark, but we carried no light. At about one o'clock a Chebec sang his sharp, scolding note for us. At about two o'clock an Ovenbird sang for us as we passed through a dense piece of woods. A few moments later a Catbird commenced to sing. As we stopped to listen an Olive-sided Flycatcher sang several times. Up to this time it was perfectly dark. As it commenced to grow light at three, a Song Sparrow piped up his song, and at 3.10 several Alder Flycatchers commenced to sing. At 3.15, all the robins began their usual morning notes, and the other birds joined in the chorus.

On June 30th my friend and I climbed Mt. Bigelow, and our observation upon the Warblers breeding there may be of interest. Along near a bog of hackmatack, in a scraggly spruce, we found a Tennessee warbler singing loudly, and he evidently had a nest

nearby. On the brow of the mountain we passed through a growth of spruce where the ground was green with liverworts. Here Black-poll Warblers were common and a Yellow-bellied Flycatcher was heard. The top of the mountain was a huge ledge with a growth of spruce and birch. The most common bird here was the Black-poll again. Nashvilles were also common in the deciduous growths. We also heard several Olive-backed Thrushes and White-throated Sparrows.

The Prairie Horned Lark is a summer resident on the "Ridge" in the town of Eustis and also on the "Mile Square" in Avon, both sections being elevated areas of farming land.

Avon, Me.

DANA W. SWEET.

A PRISONER, AND WHY?—In August, 1904, in company with a party of ornithologists, I made a tour of the lakes and wilds of Washington County, a trip rich in bird incidents, one of which suggested the above heading.

While rambling about the woods near Cathance Lake I observed a commotion in a growth of low saplings about twenty yards from the path where I stood; the cause appeared to be a bunch of small birds in close scrimmage; with the aid of my glasses I could see that it was a nest overflowing with young birds, one of which appeared to be jumping up and pouncing down upon the others.

As I approached nearer to the nest three of the birds flew off with the ease of an adult, leaving the fourth, which I could see was fastened in some manner to the nest; I pulled the branch down close to me and recognized the nest to be a Chebec's, with the young bird securely fastened by a horse hair, tied around its leg so tightly as to cut to the cords and bone all the way around, the other end being woven into the nest.

After liberating the prisoner by the use of my pocket scissors, I turned my attention to the other three which had remained nearby and observed that they were fat, fluffy and lazy and appeared larger than the tired parents, who were more than busy trying to bring enough food to keep up their present state of health.

Why was this bird a prisoner? through the accidental looping of that hair about its leg or from the reported habit of some birds using such means to keep unruly members of their family in the nest?

Lubec, Me.

CLARENCE H. CLARK.

## Migration Reports, 1904.

Reports for 1904 were made by: W. H. Brownson, Portland, Cumberland County; Arthur H. Norton, Westbrook, Cumberland County; Everett E. Johnson, East Hebron, Oxford County; Mabel P. Ridley, Castine, Hancock County; Dana W. Sweet, Avon, Franklin County; J. Merton Swain, Skowhegan, Somerset County; Ora W. Knight, Bangor, Penobscot County; Joseph C. Morin, Fort Kent, Aroostook County.

Migration reports for the Maine Ornithological Society should be addressed as follows:

DANA SWEET,  
Phillips, Maine.

	PORTLAND, W. H. BROWNSON, CASTINE.		AVON. SK'WH'G'N. BANGOR. FT. KENT.	
Pied-billed Grebe,	{	June 17		
Loon,	{	Sept. 14		
American Merganser,		April 1	May 22	May 9
Hooded Merganser,		" 2		
Mallard Duck,	{	Oct. 24		
Black Duck,	{	April 3		
Red-legged Black Duck,		Sept. 23		
Gray Duck,		Nov. 15		
Wood Duck,		" 7		
Lesser Scaup Duck,		April 10		
American Goldeneye,		Oct. 13		
Bufflehead,		" 8		
Canada Goose,		Oct. 28		
American Bittern,		" 28		
Blue Heron,	{	May 30	" 22	March 20
	{	April 20		May 4
Green Heron,		Sept. 24		April 20
Black-crowned Night Heron,		May 30		
		" 28	Aug. 2	

American Coot,	May	Oct. 24	March 23	
Red Phalarope,	" 17	Sept. 26		
American Woodcock,		April 5	April 7	" 4
Semipalmated Sandpiper,		Sept. 23	Sept. 17	May 8
Solitary Sandpiper,	" 21	April 26	May 30	" 25
Bartramian Sandpiper,		" 14	Aug. 26	" 9
Spotted Sandpiper,				Resident
Semipalmated Plover,				May 10
Canada Ruffed Grouse,	April 12	May 10	April 11	June 7
Marsh Hawk,	March 27	" 9	" 16	May 12
Sharp-shinned Hawk,	May 3	Nov. 18		April 8
Cooper's Hawk,				March 28
American Goshawk,				April 24
Red-tailed Hawk,	March 20	March 26	April 2	" 26
Red-shouldered Hawk,		" 28		" 25
Broad-winged Hawk,	April 22	April 3	May 1	May 2
Duck Hawk,	" 13	" 10		April 16
Pigeon Hawk,		Sept. 3		April 30
Sparrow Hawk,				
Fish Hawk,				
Barred Owl,				
Saw-whet Owl,				
Black-billed Cuckoo,				
Belted Kingfisher,				
Hairy Woodpecker,	May 17	April 7	May 30	May 3
Downy Woodpecker,		Sept. 1	Jan. 22	Resident
Arctic Three-toed Woodpecker,			March 25	"
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker,				
Red-headed Woodpecker,				
Flicker,				
Whip-poor-will,				
Nighthawk,				
Chimney Swift,				
Ruby-throated Humming Bird,				
Kingbird,				





Song Sparrow,	March 20	March 22	March 25	March 22	"	26	"	25	March 27	April 9
Swamp Sparrow	"	May 21	April 2	"	May	6	April	8	May 4	
Fox Sparrow,	March 25	March 25	Oct. 29	"	Oct.	8		7		
Chewink,	May	May 5								
Rose-breasted Grosbeak,	May 22		May 14	May	May	15	May	11	"	30
Indigo Bunting,			"	"	"	24	June	1		
Scarlet Tanager,			"	"	"	16	May	26		
Purple Martin,		"	"	"	April	26	April	26	"	3
Cliff Swallow,	"	9	"	May	May	10	May	13	"	3
Barn Swallow,	"	1	"	"	April	27	"	1	"	4
Tree Swallow,	April 10	April 14	April 6	May 7	"	27	April	20	"	1
Bank Swallow,	May	"	"	April 22	May	10	May	25	"	21
Cedar Waxwing,	April 10	May 30	April 27	March 26	"	27	April	12	June	7
Northern Shrike,	April 17	April 12	Oct. 27	April 5	March 23		April	22	April	5
Loggerhead Shrike,	"	May 20	May 21	May 24	May	18	May	25	May	23
Red-eyed Vireo,	May 22	May 20			Sept.	22	"	8	"	23
Philadelphia Vireo,	"	16								May 14
Warbling Vireo,	May 22	May 22			May	6	May	12		
Yellow-throated Vireo,	"	"			"	4	"	6	May	7
Blue-headed Vireo,	May 6	"	May 13	May	"	8	"	15		
Black and White Warbler,	"	8	17	"	"		"	30		
Nashville Warbler,	"	"	"	"	"	7	"	10	"	15
Tennessee Warbler,	6	"	May 15	"	"	16	"	9	"	15
Northern Parula Warbler,	"	"	8	"	"	9	"	9	"	23
Yellow Warbler,	"	"	"	"	"	9	"	9	"	4
Black-throated Blue Warbler,	April 22	"	"	April 26	"	5	April	26	"	8
Myrtle Warbler,	{	Aug. 21								
Magnolia Warbler,	May 8		May 22	May	"	8	May	13		
Chestnut-sided Warbler,	"	12	"	"	"	8	"	13		
Bay-breasted Warbler,	"	"	20	"	"	8	"	16		
Black-poll Warbler	"	22	"	"	"	24	"	27	"	30
Blackburnian Warbler,	"	26	"	"	"	22	"	5	"	15
Black-throated Green Warbler,	"	"	"	"	"	8	"	7	"	
Pine Warbler,	April 23	April 23	April 23	"	"	6	April	26		
Yellow Palm Warbler,	"	19	Sept. 20	April 20	Sept.	26	"	24		

	PORTLAND, WESTBROOK, E. HEBRON, CASTINE, AVON.			SK'WH'G'N, BANGOR, FT. KENT.		
Ovenbird,	May 7	May 7	May 8	May 8	May 11	May 15
Waterthrush,	" 14	May 7	July 24	" 6	" 7	
Mourning Warbler,	" 8	" 12	May 7	May 9	" 16	" 25
Northern Yellow-throat,	" 17	" 17	" 21	Aug. 10	" 16	" 12
Wilson's Warbler,	" 17	" 21	" 8	Aug. 10	" 12	" 12
Canadian Warbler,	" 8	" 7	" 8	" 8	" 4	" 12
Redstart,	" 21	Sept. 24	" 13	Oct. 7	" 13	" 21
American Pipit,	" 13	May 22	" 6	May 20	" 10	" 10
Catbird	" 13	June 19	" 6	Aug. 10	" 10	" 10
Brown Thrasher,	" 13	Sept. 17	Oct. 8	May 1	" 4	" 4
Winter Wren,	" 13	Sept. 17	Oct. 8	May 1	" 4	" 4
Short-billed Marsh Wren,	" 13	Sept. 17	Oct. 8	May 1	" 4	" 4
Brown Creeper,	" 13	Sept. 17	Oct. 8	May 1	" 4	" 4
White-breasted Nuthatch,	" 13	Sept. 17	Oct. 8	May 1	" 4	" 4
Red-breasted Nuthatch,	" 13	Sept. 17	Oct. 8	May 1	" 4	" 4
Hudsonian Chickadee,	" 13	Sept. 17	Oct. 8	May 1	" 4	" 4
Golden-crowned Kinglet,	" 13	Sept. 17	Oct. 8	May 1	" 4	" 4
Ruby-crowned Kinglet,	" 13	Sept. 17	Oct. 8	May 1	" 4	" 4
Veery,	" 13	Sept. 17	Oct. 8	May 1	" 4	" 4
Olive-backed Thrush,	" 13	Sept. 17	Oct. 8	May 1	" 4	" 4
Hermit Thrush,	" 13	Sept. 17	Oct. 8	May 1	" 4	" 4
Robin,	" 13	Sept. 17	Oct. 8	May 1	" 4	" 4
Bluebird,	" 13	Sept. 17	Oct. 8	May 1	" 4	" 4

# The Journal

of the

## Maine Ornithological Society

Published by the Society on the first of March, June, September and December

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### The Ducks of Merrymeeting Bay in the Season of 1905.

By FRANK T. NOBLE.

The duck shooting at Merrymeeting Bay the past season (1905), has not been up to the expectations of many who participated in the grand shooting afforded on this sheet of water and the adjacent streams the previous year (1904). The large and heretofore unusual flights of Mallards, Widgeons, Redheads and Gadwalls which visited and hung about the bay so persistently last year were almost entirely absent, while the coming of the Bluebills (Greater and Lesser Scaup), usually so plentiful in October, was waited for day after day in vain, and only a few insignificant bunches put in an appearance at all. Blue-winged and Green-winged Teal were not nearly as abundant as last year, although a few good-sized flocks of the former were present early in the season. The Ruddy Ducks, or the Broadbills, as the gunners call them, usually so common in October, deferred their coming until the morning after the big storm of October 12. Then they came in large numbers and hundreds were shot, but this seemed to be the beginning and end of the flight, for only scattering ones were seen afterwards.

Many theories are expressed as to why these various species of Ducks were so abundant last year and so scarce this season. We can but surmise. We are utterly unable to fathom the Ducks' reasoning for migrating over one particular course one season and over a different one the next, or as to why they come early one year

and late the year following, or, again, why they abandon a course altogether. Take, for example, the American Golden-eye (*Clangula americana*). In former years and until quite recently it has been one of the most numerous of the diving fowl in the open water of the bay, and hundreds of them were shot every year. I doubt if a dozen birds were taken this year, or twice that number seen here. They are expert divers and well able to take care of themselves. They are not exterminated. I doubt if their numbers are diminished at all, but they certainly have changed their route of migration, for the present at least, yet they are liable to be with us in increased numbers any year.

The only species not showing a marked decrease this year was that grand old stand-by, the Dusky, or Black Duck. From the last of August until late in November the number of these elegant birds present in the bay was probably even greater than last year, and from feeding so long on the wild rice, which was never so abundant here, they became exceedingly fat and of fine flavor, and late in the season could be numbered by the thousands.

They early became educated to the ways of the modern gunner, however, with his repeating shotgun, or, still worse, "Automatic" (which fires six shots in three seconds), and after feeding on the rice during the night, the only time they are safe, they wisely take themselves out of the bay at the first signs of daybreak, flying seaward, only to return again long after dark.

This flock increases daily until in October there are so many of them that the noise made in rising from the water in the still morning air is something awe-inspiring and never to be forgotten. It is like the roar of some mighty cataract, or the awful rumbling of an earthquake, and almost fills one with fear as the uncanny sound continues second after second, until the whole flock rises from the water and takes wing.

This wise habit of daily migrating is doubtless the salvation of *Anas obscura* and makes his tribe safe from extinction.

There are times when, with one accord, they decline to go seaward until driven. These occasions are very rare, however, usually

when a heavy southerly gale is blowing, with rain. At such times they seem to reason that out at sea is not a desirable place and they cling to the open waters of the bay, even with its many dangers, until forced to go.

Few gunners or naturalists who visit the bay become acquainted with the main flock of Black Ducks, excepting as they hear the sound of their rushing wings as they rise from the grass and fly seaward before it is sufficiently light to see even the outline of the flock, and the wish is often expressed that they might have just one look during daylight at what to them is a vast, yet unknown quantity. It was the writer's good fortune on the first day of November to behold this famous concourse of water fowl at his leisure, to note their formation on the water, their actions, and to view plainly the motions of the thousands of pairs of wings as they made the shores of the bay echo with that terrific roar when rising, to watch them circling in mid-air and their gradual return to the water again.

On this particular morning we left the shore in our float just before baybreak. It was raining and the wind was blowing a gale from the south—not a very comfortable-feeling morning when lying in the bottom of a wet float, but that is one of the trifles well-seasoned duck hunters don't mind. The Great Sands appeared to be fairly alive with ducks feeding in the wild rice. We could hear them in every direction. A little further out and the air was suddenly filled with a rumble, and then a roar like an earthquake, and we knew the birds had started. Our surprise was greater, however, when we heard them settle again out on the open water, for such a course was very unusual.

We worked our way slowly down the channel, facing the cold, cutting raindrops, and waited for daylight, which soon came and brought to us a sight never to be forgotten. Before us was this horde of water fowl which previously had been known to us only by sound when shielded by darkness. It was a beautiful sight. Extending from the "Chops" way up past Brick Island for more than a mile in the Cathance channel was an unbroken line of



Black Ducks, "Lobsters," the natives call them. They were there by the thousands, and appeared to be almost wholly the large red-legged variety. They were splashing and pruning their feathers, rearing themselves on end and flapping their wings and talking as only ducks in convention can talk. These very large flocks do not, as many suppose, form in one large, circular mass, but rather in an irregular line and in no place are more than twenty or twenty-five birds deep, often less.

It is about impossible to scull such a flock as stray birds are always straggling quite a distance from the main body. Such are invariably very many and rise before the float is within shooting distance. Rise but one bird in such a flock and the whole bunch is sure to go.

As it became evident the birds did not intend to go to sea, we decided to scull them, not that we expected to get within range, but with the desire for a closer view. We made for about the centre of the long black line and soon were within one hundred and fifty yards and with our glasses had a grand view. We could see a few Mallard drakes scattered here and there, but no other interlopers; everything was Black Ducks. On we sculled and were rapidly reducing the distance when the nearest straggler jumped, then those nearest followed and then the entire flock from end to end rose into the air with a roar that fairly shook the bay.

In the air they separated into detached flocks of from twenty to one hundred, and after circling about for five minutes again settled in another section of the bay, but in the open water as before—never in the grass. A second time we sculled them, but with precisely the same result as before. We had refrained from firing our guns all this time, the observations being all too interesting. Following our second attempt the birds alighted near the "Chops," again, where doubtless they would have remained some time had not another float put in an appearance whose occupants evidently possessed more enthusiasm than good judgment, for essaying a scull at the end of the flock the ducks of course rose several gun shots away. The grand sight was too much and they blazed

away gun after gun with their repeaters, with the result of simply frightening the flock which circled once and then making a bee line to the south rose high over Butler's Head and passed out to sea in the teeth of the gale.

I cannot close this article without an allusion to that great evil, the repeating shotgun—as witnessed daily in this famous ducking ground. It is certainly a serious matter and one which must shortly be reckoned with if our shooting is to be preserved. In making this broad statement I voice not only my own views, but the candid opinion of many of the older native gunners of the bay shore, whose observations of the results have extended over many years, and who, themselves, have been forced to adopt the use of these terrifying magazine guns in order to “hold their own,” as as they express it, with others, who bring them to the bay. Such have repeatedly assured me of the great harm these furious fusillades have done to the birds and are even now doing to the limited number that are left, and even asked if something could not be done to prohibit their use. They say they would welcome the day when every one would be obliged to go back to the old double barrel breech loader. The birds would then have a show at least, and all the gunners would be on an equal footing as far as firearms go.

The evils are two-fold. A repeater or magazine gun in the hands of a good shot will enable him to exterminate a flock of six or eight if the birds can be sculled within thirty-five yards, while in the hands of an amateur or poor shot the entire six shots will be banged away at the birds utterly regardless of whether they are in within reasonable distance or not. This is, perhaps, the greater evil of the two. It is so “handy” to have six shots at one’s elbow, that it seldom happens, and I will not except the expert or the able native gunner who knows better, but what if he fires at all at a rising flock he will empty his gun at them even if he knows the birds are out of range.

This terrible and senseless cannonading—I can call it nothing else—frightens such birds as escape, into a perfect frenzy and it is little wonder that thousands of them are driven in distraction from

the bay only to revisit it for their favorite food under cover of darkness.

The advent of the "Automatic" gun is a step further in the process of extermination. This nefarious machine needs no pumping, but shoots its entire contents with lightning rapidity with but the pressure of a finger, and without removing the gun from the shoulder.

As for myself, I have never used anything but an ordinary double gun, and twelve gauge at that, and believe anything more destructive or noisy works to the ultimate disadvantage of the gunner as well as the birds.

Three illustrations and I will close.

I have myself seen a double float scull a bunch of birds, and when, through unskillful maneuvering the birds rose wild, seen twelve shots from two repeaters fired into their retreating ranks in less time than it takes to relate it, with the result only of a senseless frightening of the birds.

I have also witnessed a good shot carefully scull a bunch of six Black Ducks, getting two with the first shot on the water, and then as they rose, pick off in rapid succession one by one, the other remaining four with his deadly repeater, exterminating the flock.

Again, when waiting on the shore of the bay in October, I observed a bunch of twelve Black Ducks fly over the woods and make for a small pond hole where I knew three gunners were lying in wait with repeaters. In a few seconds *fifteen shots* were fired with such a rapidity that they could scarcely be counted and one lone duck came out over the tree tops the sole survivor of the hapless flock.

These illustrations of the workings of the magazine gun must convince any fair minded sportsman of the desirability of prohibiting their use, and by all means let us work to that end before it is too late.

There is little use in locking the stable door after the horse is stolen.

## Notes on the Warblers Found in Maine.

(Continued from p. 41.)

Contributions to the Life History of the Myrtle Warbler.

*Dendroica coronata* (Linn.).

By ORA WILLIS KNIGHT.

GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION—MIGRATION RANGE.—Eastern North America, occasionally straggling westward, even to the Pacific coast.

BREEDING RANGE.—In summer essentially confined to the Canadian fauna, and, though breeding southward in the mountains in straggling numbers, its chief breeding grounds are from the northern United States northeastward.

WINTER RANGE.—Stragglers winter from Cape Elizabeth, Maine, southward along the coast, but the species chiefly winters from southern New England and the Ohio valley southward to the West Indies and through Mexico to Panama.

At the approach of warm weather the Myrtle Warblers enter the State from their southern winter homes. Though a few individuals have been recorded as wintering near Portland at Cape Elizabeth (Cf. Brownson, JOURNAL Me. Orn. Soc., March, 1905, pp. 27-28), this may be attributed to peculiar local conditions. The first individuals usually arrive in southern Maine about April 15th to April 22nd, and the usual time of appearance of the species at Bangor is about April 22nd to April 30th. The first individuals reach extreme northern Maine about May 1st. Common throughout the State during the migration, the individuals gradually diminish in numbers until by the tenth of May practically none are to be found in southern Maine, and, leaving a fair proportion of their numbers to nest in northern, eastern and western Maine within Canadian faunal limits, the tide of migration passes beyond our boundary.

The scattered flocks pass on, leaving here and there a pair of mated birds, in many instances individuals being found frequenting the very same localities from year to year under conditions which

would almost warrant the assumption that the very same individual birds had returned to their summer homes. I have observed pairs of these birds which had seemingly appeared over night in their well-known homes of the previous year. They would hang around for a few days, and by May 15th to 20th begin nest building. Other individual males who arrived with the moving throngs evidently were seeking mates, for they made advances to the female contingent, hopping from twig to twig with outspread wings, chipping and fluttering, now repulsed by the fair one, and now accepted by another one to whom advances were made, to finally spend a few days in a favorable spot and begin nest building at a later date than others of their kind, who were apparently old married folks. In spring and fall the call note is a "chip" or a "check," uttered sometimes on the wing, but more often while busily engaged in seeking for insects from twig to twig. But about the time nest building begins the male perches near the top of some small evergreen tree and utters a pleasing song, consisting of a succession of some twelve to fifteen clear and musically warbled notes. The song is very distinct and characteristic of the species, though at least occasionally another different but still characteristic song, a soft, low warble, is heard.

During migration the species may be found in the trees of the city streets, in gardens, on the roofs of houses, and along highways and through the woods, hopping from place to place. As soon as nest building begins, the favorite locality selected is a thicket of evergreen trees near the highway, some open pasture containing a few clumps of scattered evergreens, small thickets of evergreens along the banks of some stream or river or about the shore of a pond or lake, or a row of trees about some country dwelling or in an orchard. In the vast majority of cases an evergreen tree is selected as a nesting site, though occasionally some hardwood tree, such as maple, apple or birch, may be taken. A majority of nests seem to be placed in cedar trees, with fir and spruce following as close second choices. The nest may be placed against the trunk, supported on some small branch extending therefrom, or in a fork made by

three or more branches or on top of a limb at some distance from the trunk and even near the extremity of the limb. The height of the nest may be as low as four feet from the ground or as high as twenty-five feet, eight to ten feet up being a fair average.

The foundation of the nest consists of spruce, fir or hemlock twigs from which the spills have fallen. A number of these twigs are arranged and compactly criss-crossed and rounded. Next comes a superstructure, often composed of fine plant fibres and grass stems, and then comes a lining of horsehair and feathers. In some nests the lining is simply hair, but in most examples feathers play an important part. A majority of the nests I have seen were lined with the feathers from the breasts of various small birds which had been picked up here and there. These feathers were many of them placed so that their bases were imbedded in the bottom of the nest structure and the tips of the feathers arose above the border of the nest and curved until the tips of the entire circle met above the center of the nest, hiding its contents from view. The dimensions of a typical nest are: Diameter, outside, 4.5 inches, inside, 2.25 inches; depth, outside, 1.75 inches, inside, 1 inch.

The number of eggs laid is usually four, often five and sometimes only three. The extreme dates in my possession when fresh eggs were found near Bangor are between May 30th and June 6th; a nest found June 14th contained young about a week old. The time taken to build a nest is about ten days. The female does most of the work, but the male, occasionally, at least, brings some material and often is present and sings while the female is working. The eggs are usually laid one each day until the set is complete, though occasionally a day may be skipped without laying. Incubation ordinarily begins upon deposition of the first egg, or, at any rate, the female is usually found sitting upon a nest containing only one or two eggs, and which later has four or five eggs as the full complement. The eggs are dull white or creamy white in ground color, wreathed with a circle of spots about the larger end, these spots being of various shades of brown, red-brown, lilac, umber and grey. A few scattered spots may also be found on other portions of the



egg, but the spots are usually most frequent and of greater size at the larger end. Occasionally a freak egg may be found, in which the wreathing is about the smaller end, but such cases are rare. A typical set of four eggs taken at Stockton Springs, Maine, June 6th, measure as follows: .68 x .52, .67 x .51, .70 x .52, .68 x .51 inches. The largest egg of which record can be found measures .72 x .55. As runt eggs have been known to occur, there is no limit within reason to the smallness of freak eggs of this or any other species of small birds' eggs. The average dimensions are very close to those of the set of four eggs given above.

The female does most of the work of incubation, but on very rare and exceptional occasions I have found the male bird incubating and even engaged in song while on the nest. The time in one case which elapsed between the laying of the first egg and the hatching of the first young bird was two hundred and ninety-five hours, plus or minus an error of an hour and forty minutes. It was not known by me nearer than within some forty minutes of the exact time when the first egg was laid. The first egg to hatch was pipped for some hours before the young bird finally emerged from the shell. The time when the young bird was finally triumphant is not known within two hours and forty minutes, as this period of time elapsed between visits when it was found not hatched and hatched. The period of incubation is thus shown to be doubtless between twelve and thirteen days.

The natal down rapidly dries and fluffs out on the young birds and is sepia-brown in color. At the end of six to seven days pin feathers begin to appear, and by the twelfth to fourteenth day the young are well advanced in their juvenal plumage and able to scramble out of the nest. Two to three days after leaving the nest they are able to assay short flights. I am inclined to believe that where the nest is visited frequently for the purposes of observation the young reach the stage where they scramble out and away much sooner than were they left undisturbed, but in this latter case one could not make the necessary observations.

The juvenal plumage above and below has a generally streaked

appearance. Above, the centers of the feathers are blackish, edged with drab and yellowish brown; below, much the same general appearance, but far lighter in coloration and with a pale yellow color on the abdomen; wings blackish, with two indistinct, whitish bars; wing feathers edged with drab; tail blackish, with feathers edged with drab; bill and feet dusky buff.

In August, by a complete moult, the first winter plumage is acquired. This is rather duller colored than the corresponding plumage of adult birds, the black markings and feathers of a duller tint and the edgings of the feathers less grey.

The first nuptial plumage is acquired by a partial moult in early spring and is not quite as brilliant as that of full adult birds. A moult beginning in late July or early August gives the adult winter plumage, which in early spring by partial moult gives the full adult nuptial plumage. Descriptions of the full adult plumages of both sexes can be found in any current manual on birds, so it is needless to give them here.

The food of the adult birds in spring and summer consists almost entirely of small grubs and larvæ of beetles and lepidopterous insects, eggs of various species of insects, beetles, mosquitoes, and, in fact, almost any insects, their eggs or larvæ which are likely to be found during a careful search of the trees frequented by the birds. Many of the adult insects are taken on the wing, the warblers taking short springs and flights into the air for this purpose. The young for the first few days are fed on the softer sorts of insects secured by the parents, and later their fare is like that of the parents in every way. Towards fall considerable vegetable food creeps into their diet, doubtless owing to the scarcity of insects. Berries of the Virginia creeper, dogwood of various species, viburnum berries, seeds of the alder, and doubtless other similar vegetable matter is consumed. I have detailed only such as I have actually seen individuals eating or found in their stomachs.

The last of August the first migrants from the north begin to appear, and by mid-September the migrating hosts are abundant. They dally with us longer than in the springtime, and it is well

along toward November before the bulk have withdrawn from the State. I have seen a few near Bangor as late as November 15th, but this is rather exceptional.

During the fall months they enter city gardens and orchards, climb over the roofs and along the gutters of houses, peering into every nook and cranny. They hover on beating wings about such crannies of the clapboards and finish where they may have spied some delicious, big fat spider, chrysalis or other delectable morsel, and such finds are speedily devoured. Now peering, now hovering, and now springing into the air after some winged insect, they stop about a building for a few hours or days, slowly but surely retreating southward, until at last one day in late October or early November they are with us still and the next dawn they are not to be found, nor do we see them until another spring has come.

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Members of the Maine Ornithological Society should know that on account of the non-payment of dues the financial condition of the Society is not by any means satisfactory. If each member would send in his or her dollar, there would be a comfortable balance in the treasury, instead of an embarrassing deficit. The dues are one dollar a year, and the cash should be forwarded to the treasurer, Mr. J. Merton Swain, Skowhegan, Maine. Will not every member make a prompt effort to remit the sum due, and thus put the Society on the desired footing? Many subscribers to the JOURNAL are also in arrears, and it is desired that they forward their subscriptions at once to the editor, W. H. Brownson, Portland, Maine. The subscription is but 50 cents a year.

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The closing number of volume VII of the Maine JOURNAL is issued promptly at the time it is due, and the day of publication coincides with the first day of the annual meeting of the Maine Ornithological Society, held in Portland this year in the rooms of the Portland Society of Natural History. The members will find that the editors have done all that was possible with the facilities afforded them. It has been difficult to induce our trained observers of birds to give the JOURNAL the result of their investigations. During the coming year, if the JOURNAL is to be continued, it will be necessary for each member to contribute something to these columns, even if it is nothing more than a brief note telling when the first Bluebird came in the spring or when the last Warbler was seen in the fall. If we all take hold in earnest we can make the Maine JOURNAL one of the most interesting publications in its class in the country. If the whole burden of providing matter is left to the editors then the JOURNAL will not fairly represent the Society. This is a subject which the editor hopes to discuss with the members at the present annual meeting.

Some means of better financial support must be provided if the Maine JOURNAL is to be continued. If every member paid his dues promptly and if every subscriber sent in his cash at the first of the year there would be no need of this appeal. At present the printer is unpaid for the last two numbers and the deficit must be provided by the Society.

## Bird Notes.

Notes and observations upon bird life within our State are earnestly desired from all our readers for publication in this column, and should be sent to the Associate Editor, Frank T. Noble, Augusta, Maine.

A SPECIMEN OF THE RING-NECKED DUCK FROM MERRY-MEETING BAY.—There is little to report in the way of rare or uncommon varieties of water fowl the past season on the ducking grounds in the vicinity of Merrymeeting Bay, the only variety being a male Ring-necked Duck (*Aythya collaris*), which the associate editor shot on October 11. The bird was consorting with a small flock of Lesser Scaup Ducks or small Bluebills and so closely resembled a drake of this species that its identity was not realized until some time after its capture. As this bird is one of our rarest Ducks gunners shooting Bluebills should examine all drakes with great care for the white ring around the bill and the grayish (not white) speculum, sure characteristics of the Ring-necked or Ring-billed Duck.

FRANK T. NOBLE.

TO PRESERVE THE BREEDING EIDER DUCKS.—Bird lovers throughout the state will be glad to know that at the meeting of the Governor and Council, November 9, that honorable body passed an order, authorizing the land-agent to issue a written permit to the National Association of Audubon Societies to have exclusive use of one of the islands of Maine, with the expressed purpose of the Association's protecting the wild birds breeding or resorting there.

To have witnessed the interest, which Mr. Ring, the land-agent, took in issuing this document, without a moment's delay, would have cheered anyone interested in the matter.

This action was in view of the fact that with such protection as the Association was able to afford, upon one mass of rock the past summer twenty-four young Eider Ducks were raised, or certainly not less than four broods. By having control of the island, and keeping all trespassers off, it is to be hoped that the number may increase. This is the largest duck found within the United States, and for beauty and value it ranks in the first class. Maine is the only state

in the Union in which it breeds, and while twenty-five years ago it occupied no less than fifteen of our islands and ledges to breed upon, it has been gradually reduced to the very verge of disappearance as a breeding bird. (In winter it is abundant coming in hordes from the Gulf of St. Lawrence and Labrador.)

Every ornithologist and bird student in Maine should take a personal pride in the fact that Maine still possesses this valuable and beautiful duck, and a keen interest in this effort of the National Association of Audubon Societies to preserve and increase its numbers.

ARTHUR H. NORTON.

THE LAPLAND LONGSPUR AT SCARBOROUGH.—Apparently the last specimen of this bird to be identified as occurring in Maine was upon October 31, 1901, when five were taken at Pine Point (JOURNAL Me. Orn. Soc., VI, p. 44).

In commenting upon the bird the belief was expressed that the species would be found to be more frequent as a migrant than has been supposed. Since that year little search has been made for it so far as known. It was therefore very gratifying to be able to determine the presence of the bird again at Pine Point (in Scarborough) on November 5, 1905, when Mr. Wm. H. Brownson, Mr. J. F. Fanning and the writer found no less than four.

Large numbers of Snow Buntings and a few Horned Larks were present, and though the Longspurs mingled with these, they seemed to prefer their own society and were at first found separate from them. The first pair found was feeding with a Dunlin upon a windrow of seaweed at the edge of highwater mark, at high tide. Later the habit (before recorded) of crouching by the side of a tussuck, or other dark object upon the white sand, was again noticed. In flight the birds are to be distinguished from the Larks by smaller size, and by not having the undulating motion of the latter, while the lack of any white in the wings, a decidedly darker and rather shorter appearance will serve to distinguish them from Snow Buntings. But with fall specimens of *Calcarius* and *Passerina* upon the ground, especially the young, the closest attention of the observer will be necessary. With *Otocoris* there is little reason for confusion at a reasonably long distance.

The migration of the great bulk of the Longspur has been shown to be to the westward of the Alleghany range, and only the stragglers occur in New England. (C. F. Howe, ANK XVIII, page 396.)

ARTHUR H. NORTON.



PORTLAND BIRD NOTES.—Northern Shrikes are more plentiful this fall around Portland than for a number of years. On the 19th of November I saw a flock of six or seven at Cumberland.

I have not been able this fall to see a single Virginia Rail, though I have frequented the places where they are usually found. Inquiry of several well-known gunners brings the information that not a single bird of this species has been shot by them in this vicinity this fall, but one man says that he has heard Rails of this species. On the other hand, the little Yellow Rail, usually so rare, has been here in unusual numbers. Several have been shot at the Dike marsh and one or two at Pine Point.

Short-eared Owls have been in this vicinity abundantly this fall. Several have been shot and at least two have been captured alive. A Great Horned Owl was shot and stunned in the town of Windham, being picked up alive and brought to Portland, where he was on public view in a store window for several days.

A young Broad-winged Hawk was captured alive at Freeport early in September. It was kept for some days in the rooms of the Portland Society of Natural History, where it became so uneasy that it beat itself painfully and continually against its temporary cage. Its wings were not strong enough to enable the bird to fly, so there was nothing left to do but to end its life and prepare it for the museum.

The Grassbirds (Pectoral Sandpipers) usually abundant on the Scarborough marshes were noticeably scarce during the autumn. The gunners got not more than occasionally one or two at a time.

Snow Buntings were seen at Pine Point on the 8th of October, only two individuals.

While the fall migration was in progress a great number of birds were killed within the city limits, probably by striking overhead wires. Sapsuckers were picked up most frequently, five or six being taken to the local taxidermists for mounting. Half a dozen other species lost their lives in the same manner, among them being Song Sparrows, Myrtle Warblers, Yellow Palm Warblers, Juncos, Flickers and others.

Snowy Owls are plentiful in this vicinity this fall, a number having been shot at Richmond's island. Many specimens for mounting have been received by the taxidermists.

W. H. BROWNSON.









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